

Ebooks and the academic library: their usage and effect

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Summary

This dissertation aims to examine the usage of ebooks in academic libraries and their effects on both the library and its users. It investigates the influence they can have on library acquisition policies and procedures and, in light of their usage, it examines the importance of ebook promotion. Potential problems with regard to access and how the library can overcome issues concerned with licensing agreements are also considered.

The objectives of the dissertation are four-fold:

- To establish the extent to which ebooks are used in academic libraries
- To examine how libraries have adapted to selecting and acquiring ebooks and how user opinion and usage can influence this
- To determine how academic libraries promote ebooks and what influence this can have on their usage
- To investigate the problems arising with regard to access and publisher's agreements and establish how this can affect both the selection and usage of ebooks

The dissertation is qualitative and based on primary research gathered from both students of the University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education and the ebook project coordinator. A survey of all matriculated Faculty students was undertaken to obtain current opinion on ebooks. In conjunction with this, an interview was conducted with the ebook project coordinator. Secondary sources, such as data gathered on ebook usage by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) and the ebrary survey were also examined. The dissertation follows a thematic approach where each of the three key areas – usage, acquisition and promotion - are discussed individually as self-contained units. Each unit contains a literature review which reflects current opinion on ebooks from the field.

The data gathered from the questionnaire indicated that whilst many Faculty of Education students are using ebooks, their preference is for the printed book. The results indicated that the nature of some courses forces students into using ebooks as they are unable to easily visit the physical library. Ebooks are not yet regarded as the main point of information, but are instead seen as an accompaniment to existing resources and are often only used when print copies are unavailable.

The interview demonstrated sound reasons as to why ebooks were incorporated into Cambridge University library collections and recognised that they can have considerable effects on the acquisition and selection of material within an academic library. It made it evident that promotion is vital in ensuring an acceptable level of usage.

In conclusion, it appears that whilst ebooks have the ability to influence and improve certain library policies and practices and offer a more satisfactory source from which the student locates information, they are not yet achieving this potential. A strong preference for the printed word remains with many users feeling forced into using the electronic counterpart due to the distance they live from campus resources.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Whilst the existence of ebooks can be traced back to the inception of the Gutenberg Project in the 1970s, they are still a relatively new phenomenon within academic libraries. Although many have chosen to incorporate them into their collections, they have yet to evolve into a dominant information medium and a strong desire for the printed book remains.

As with most other sources of information, ebooks present a range of advantages and disadvantages to both the librarian and the library user. Their advantages are incontrovertible; for example, an ebook cannot be lost, it cannot be defaced or damaged and it usually offers users simultaneous access to the same text. Furthermore, ebooks enable the library to continue to expand its collection without encroaching on valuable shelf space and they can be accessed 24/7, 365 days a year, enabling students to fulfil their information needs at a time that is convenient for them without being constrained by library opening hours. Thus, the ebook presents itself as an ideal information medium for all students, but especially for distance learners, providing them with instantaneous access to the resources they need without having to travel to their University Library. However, ebooks offer a paradox where for every advantage, there appears to be a disadvantage. For example, ebooks are reliant on users having access to the correct technology and also an internet connection. They are subject to technical problems concerned with logging in and Digital Rights Management issues (DRM) imposed by publishers. Furthermore, publisher concern about potential breaches of copyright can lead to user frustration. Sensitive systems often block access by locking titles when they assume that copyright regulations have been contravened. These copyright regulations mean that the majority of a title has to be read on screen; a factor which has been shown to discourage a great many users.

This snapshot of both pros and cons can be seen to offer some explanation as to why ebooks have not yet engulfed the academic library community and why they remain an additional information resource option which augments the print collection rather than being the preferred option.

Thus far, a number of studies across the globe have been conducted that investigate the place of ebooks in the academic library. Most have investigated ebooks within a single institution, and have examined both user and librarian opinion and have also considered the impact and importance of promotional techniques. The surveys undertaken by ebrary and the ongoing study by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) have gathered data from multiple institutions with the latter being the largest to date. All of the studies have produced extremely interesting results with many concurring on key issues.

The ebooks@cambridge project began in 2005 after a successful trial of 112 ebooks was conducted to establish levels of interest from both students and librarians. Created and developed by several University College Librarians, its initial aim was to provide access to key undergraduate texts in electronic format in order to help meet the heavy demand placed on libraries by students who required access to the same titles concurrently. Over the last four years, the project has continued to expand and develop and now includes a number of Faculty and Departmental Libraries offering a collection that not only supports undergraduates, but also provides access to a wide range of key texts popular with the postgraduate population.

The concept of this work was sparked by the inclusion of the Faculty of Education in the ebooks@cambridge project and an active role in the selection and acquisition of relevant education ebook titles. I have liaised on a regular basis with the ebook project coordinator and continue to play a significant part in promoting the collection to both Faculty staff and students. This dissertation focuses on ebook usage by students in academic libraries. As yet, there has been little investigation into the use of ebooks by academic staff and, consequently, this area is not examined. Similarly, ebook usage within other types of library and information services - public libraries for example - does not form part of this study as it differs greatly to usage within an academic environment. Throughout the work, an ebook is considered to be an electronic version of a title read using software such as the Adobe Acrobat Reader and subscribed to by an organisation which authenticated users can access through the internet at anytime and from anywhere. The ebooks discussed in this dissertation do not need to be read on a hand-held device and are of a predominantly academic nature.

This dissertation follows a thematic approach with each area studied as a self-contained unit including the results and a literature review. The aim of the dissertation is to discover student opinion on ebooks, the way in which they are currently being used and accepted, and to also investigate the impact they can have on library acquisitions policies and procedures. It also examines the importance of ebook promotion and the effects this can have on overall usage. The objectives of the work are four-fold:

- To establish, by using a questionnaire, the extent to which ebooks are used in academic libraries.
- To examine how libraries establish ebook acquisition policies and how usage can influence this.
- To determine the importance and effects of promotion in relation to ebook usage and what steps academic libraries have taken to advertise this part of their collection.
- To investigate any problems arising with regard to access and publisher's agreements and establish how this can affect both the selection and usage of ebooks.

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1 Introduction

It was important to design a methodological approach which would provide data from the three key perspectives – the librarian, the ebook user and the subject expert. Thus a tertiary strategy was developed comprising of a self-completion questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and a literature review of recent research published within the field of ebooks.

After a pilot was conducted with librarian colleagues, the questionnaire was sent to a total of 1246 Faculty students undertaking a range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses. It was distributed through the University's CamTools sites, which are Virtual Learning Environments used by the Faculty to disseminate course specific information to all of its students. Each individual Faculty course has its own CamTools site on which students are registered when they begin their course. Access is granted by the University's authentication system, Raven, which is issued to all matriculated students by the Computing Service. In order to distribute the questionnaire, a survey tool was added to one's personal tools in CamTools and membership of each site was obtained in order to send messages to all course participants. The questionnaire was sent from CamTools to each student's University e-mail account.

Students were given a total of three weeks to respond and reminders were sent out after week one and week two (see Appendix A for the initial e-mail and the reminder message). After the second prompt, the frequency of the reminder message was altered to every three days resulting in a total of four e-mail messages being sent to invite students to take part in the questionnaire. Unfortunately, the second reminder was unknowingly sent when CamTools was undergoing essential technical maintenance and an e-mail was received from one student explaining that they were unable to complete the questionnaire. This may have had a slight affect on the number of responses, as students may not have returned to complete the questionnaire at a later time when access to CamTools was restored. The reminder messages proved key in increasing the overall response rate and it was noted that

the total number of responses saw a sharp increase in the hours immediately after a message was sent. Reminders were only sent to those students who had not previously replied to the questionnaire.

Employing CamTools to distribute the questionnaire was the most efficient and least time consuming approach to gathering data from Faculty students. However, three main problems arose which may have affected the results achieved. Firstly, permission to become a member of each of the individual CamTools sites had to be gained from academic staff. In most cases, this did not present any problems but one academic was reluctant to agree to this. This resulted in the need to obtain a list of all members of this particular site and to create an adhoc group comprising of all relevant e-mail addresses. Establishing this was a somewhat laborious task which involved manually inputting approximately 255 individual e-mail addresses. Furthermore, it was impossible to ascertain from the list of addresses which were student accounts and which were associated teaching staff and therefore, it was likely that the questionnaire was also circulated to those who were not actually undertaking a Faculty run course.

Secondly, this method relied on students accessing their University e-mail accounts. Whilst students are encouraged to check this on a regular basis, many of them prefer to use their own personal or work e-mail accounts and so a number of students may not have read the invitation e-mails. Additionally, it was discovered after the questionnaire had been distributed that one particular group of students had experienced technical difficulties with their University e-mail accounts and most were unable to access them. A possible solution to this problem would have been to obtain a list of all current Faculty students and use the e-mail addresses that they had provided to the Library Service which should have been the account that they accessed most frequently. However, this would have resulted in an extremely lengthy preparation time and would not necessarily have guaranteed a higher response rate.

Lastly, from studying the list of members on each course CamTools site, it became apparent that there were a number of non-students registered to each of the sites. For example, members of Faculty academic staff were registered on some of the sites, as were course mentors and other teaching associates. There was also the possibility that academic staff were registered on more than one site meaning that they would have received, and possibly replied to, multiple invitation e-mails. Although the e-mail invitation was addressed to students, there is a high possibility that non-students also responded.

Despite the potential problems presented by this methodology and without any incentive, an overall response rate of 27%, or 338 individuals, was achieved from the questionnaire although this was not evenly spread across course types. Figure 1 provides response rates for each course type.

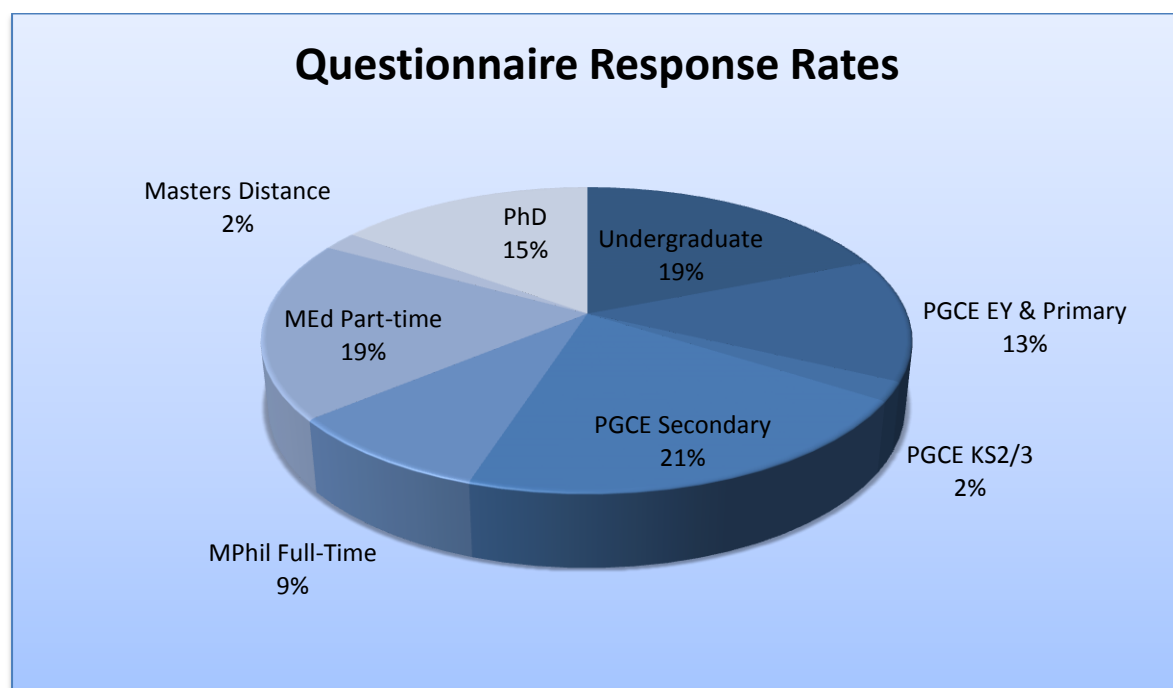


Fig. 1 Percentage of questionnaire response rates divided by Faculty course

The 2% response rate (equivalent to 8 students) from both the PGCE KS2/3 and Masters Distance courses was disappointing, particularly as ebooks would be extremely useful to students on both of these courses as their attendance in the

Faculty is relatively infrequent and many members of the latter group reside a long distance away. The low response rate from those on the Masters Distance courses may be partly explained by their lack of use of their University e-mail address. Many of them are registered on the University's automated library circulation system with a work address and, therefore, it is possible that many of the students in this group did not read the e-mail inviting them to take part in the questionnaire. The response rate from the MPhil full-time group was also disappointing. This particular group places unprecedented demands on the Library's print material and many of the education ebooks in the University's collection have been specifically selected with these students in mind. However, at the time the questionnaire was distributed, these students were working on their theses and may have felt that they did not have the time to respond. Response from the other student groups was pleasing and fairly evenly spread.

Finally, although the questionnaire was distributed to all Faculty students, providing an equal opportunity to all to respond, response rates were reliant on self-selection and there was no direct control over the sample profile. Therefore, the results gathered from the survey cannot be reliably generalised nor applied to all Faculty students or all University students. However, they do provide a valid insight into student opinion of ebooks as an information source. See Appendix B for the full questionnaire responses.

The semi-structured interview was conducted with the University College Librarian who instigated the creation of the Cambridge ebooks project and who continues to coordinate it on behalf of the whole University. A range of questions were developed which would investigate the four main objectives enabling the researcher to gather a variety of data which provided a solid insight into how ebooks have been used thus far within Cambridge, the effects that ebooks can have on academic libraries and, more specifically, how they have been managed and incorporated into library collections in Cambridge. The College Librarian was contacted by e-mail and the purpose of the interview was explained. A face-to-face meeting was scheduled and recorded to ensure accuracy. A schedule for the interview was established to ensure that all relevant and necessary aspects were covered whilst also providing

the opportunity to gather additional information on the subject. See Appendix C for the full interview schedule.

2.2 Justification of approaches selected

2.2.1 Questionnaire

As with all research methods, there are disadvantages in selecting questionnaires in order to obtain data. Bell, in her 4th edition of *'Doing your research project'*, suggests that questionnaires are fiendishly difficult to construct as the questions must be composed in such a way so as to avoid ambiguity and ensure that participants are clear about exactly what you are asking. Interpretation of open-ended questions can easily lead to misconstrued answers (pp. 136-7) which in turn will affect the overall results. Without talking directly to all participants, it can be difficult to ascertain exactly what is meant by the answers given, resulting in a need to treat the collected data somewhat tentatively. Furthermore, participants may fail to read the questionnaire correctly and may therefore respond inappropriately, or respond to questions that were not directed at them. These doubts are reinforced by Gillham who suggests that it is difficult to determine how valid the data collected from questionnaires really is (p. 1). He continues to point out that questionnaires are 'often completed hastily and carelessly' with some answers not being completed (p. 9). Additionally, non-response can prove to be a problematic issue as it is left to each individual within the target population to decide whether they want to take part in the research. Despite these negative comments however, questionnaires unarguably provide a straightforward and time saving approach to gathering data which allow multiple groups to be targeted simultaneously and present valid data which is often easy to analyse.

Due to the nature of many of the courses offered by the Faculty, collecting data at any point during the academic year would have presented itself as a troublesome task. As the data collection period fell during the final University Term, an e-mail questionnaire was the most appropriate and viable method to employ. The Faculty runs a wide range of courses, all comprising of various attendance patterns with few being considered full-time in a traditional sense. For example, those students on

PGCE courses attend teaching sessions in the Faculty throughout the first term, but after this they are required to undertake school placements and are not taught as a group again in the Faculty until the end of their course. The Masters part-time course only conducts teaching sessions once a week, but these sessions do not run during the final term as the students write their theses at this stage. Similarly, the full-time Masters students also write their theses and do not attend teaching sessions. The Masters Distance students are taught off-campus for the duration of their course and only visit the Faculty for teaching sessions once a term. There are also three additional Masters courses which are taught fully online with students rarely attending sessions in the Faculty and living some distance away. Library inductions are conducted at the beginning of each academic year when the students are grouped together, but at this stage they would not have had the opportunity to use or evaluate the electronic resources on offer.

The questionnaire comprised of a combination of both open-ended and closed questions, thus allowing the respondents to offer their opinions in their own words without being confined by the options presented to them, whilst also obtaining data to aid in answering the four objectives. A total of three open-ended questions were offered to enable the collection of qualitative data. The number of open-ended questions was intentionally kept low to prevent analysis of the data becoming too troublesome. Additionally, the closed questions which asked for more factual data were kept simple to ensure a high level of accuracy in the responses.

The results obtained may have been enhanced and expanded if the research had been conducted over a period of a whole academic year. This would have enabled all student groups to be addressed in person during their teaching sessions and would have eliminated any ambiguity on the part of both the researcher and the participants. However, a data collection period of this length was simply not viable.

2.2.2 Interview

Interviews are a relatively reliable and flexible data collection technique yielding detailed and unambiguous qualitative data. As Miles and Huberman explain, 'the

possibility for understanding latent, underlying, or nonobvious issues is strong' (p. 10). They continue to suggest that the qualitative data obtained from this method is able to provide a 'richness and holism with strong potential for revealing complexity' (p. 10). Furthermore, they enable the researcher to explain themselves thoroughly and therefore, unlike questionnaires, misinterpretation by both the interviewer and the interviewee is doubtful. Additionally, the interviewer can probe the interviewee for further information or clarification if they so desire, ensuring that the correct questions are answered whilst gathering a rich and valuable tapestry of data. However, both the time taken to conduct interviews and to process the collected data can be distinctly disadvantageous, making it an unsuitable approach when collecting data from large groups of people. Furthermore, as Drever explains, conducting interviews requires skill; 'it is not a conversation. It is a formal encounter, with a specific purpose' (p. 4). The interviewer must be able to keep the interview process on track and adhere to the schedule whilst also allowing the interviewee to respond freely and in detail.

It may have been advantageous to undertake more than one interview with a range of academic librarians across the University. However, time did not permit for this and as ebooks@cambridge is a collaborative project managed by a group of College Librarians, it is highly likely that further interviews would have yielded very similar results. Furthermore, the project coordinator has a sound in-depth knowledge of the project, its management, and issues such as budget and selection policies, making them the most suitable interview participant.

Whilst the questionnaire findings present the thoughts and opinions of the Faculty students, the interview provides data from a librarian's perspective and insights into what they believe could be achieved by ebooks. This multi-method approach from two differing perspectives therefore has the potential to generate a range of high quality informative data on the chosen subject area.

2.3 Data analysis

2.3.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire results produced both qualitative and quantitative data which was analysed manually due to the manageable response rate. The questionnaire was designed and written to ensure that each of the four areas of the dissertation were investigated with particular emphasis on the usage and discovery of the ebook collection. The closed-questions produced the quantitative data and were categorised into the four themes during the interpretation of the data. Each of the four areas were assigned a colour and the data was categorised accordingly and consistencies and contrasts were highlighted. The open-ended questions were analysed and colour-coded, indicating to which of the four themes they belonged. Common remarks from each question were noted and grouped together.

2.3.2 Interview

As only one interview was conducted, the analysis of the qualitative data gathered was relatively simple to undertake. The interview schedule was designed to ensure that a variety of questions were asked in each of the three key areas. Each area was approached individually and questions were asked systematically and in the order of the schedule. The data was transcribed to enable relevant aspects of the interview to be located quickly and easily during write-up. Key terms and phrases which concurred or contrasted with researchers in the field were then highlighted, and similarities and differences with the data gathered from the questionnaire were also noted. This analysis enabled one to easily extract those comments that helped meet the main objectives of the research. Data reduction was practised within the write-up which included selecting and simplifying the most relevant aspects of the data.

2.3.3 Literature review

The literature review reports on current thought and recent developments within the area of ebooks in academic libraries. As the appearance of ebooks in academic library collections is a relatively new phenomenon, the review mainly relies on journal

articles and conference proceedings rather than information gathered from books. It dates back no further than 1995 and was gathered by conducting a literature search on a variety of databases including Emerald, Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA) and Library, Information Science and Technology Abstracts (LISTA). It draws from data gathered by the JISC and ebrary, as well as information from other studies conducted by experts within the field.

The term ebook can be described in several ways and so in order to locate a wide range of material, searches were conducted using a variety of terms such as electronic books, ebooks and digital books. These were combined with more general terms – collection management, collection development, and academic libraries – to obtain the articles used in this review.

2.4 Summary

Overall, the methods employed to conduct the data collection were those best suited to the given situation. If the data collection were to be gathered over a far longer period, it may have been possible to achieve a higher response rate from the questionnaire. The questionnaire presented three main problems; firstly, in one case, it was not possible to obtain permission to send the questionnaire using the most straightforward method, secondly it was likely that some of the respondents were not Faculty students and thirdly, many students do not frequently access the e-mail account that the message was sent to. If the study was repeated, it would be beneficial to create adhoc groups using e-mail addresses provided to the Library. Not only would this ensure that the message was sent to frequently checked e-mail accounts, it would also guarantee that the correct people were targeted in the most effective way. Conducting a semi-structured interview enabled the collection of data from a librarian's viewpoint. Its structure enabled key aspects to be explored whilst also allowing the interviewee to expand and offer additional thoughts and information.

Chapter 3: Measure of usage

3.1 Introduction

The usage of ebooks is a topic that has been widely investigated within the field of academic librarianship. The majority of studies conducted thus far have examined the number of hits an ebook has received rather than any detailed usage behaviour. Nonetheless, this data is important in ascertaining the relevance and popularity of ebooks in UK academic libraries. The results achieved from the questionnaire were most successful in providing a significant and interesting insight into Faculty of Education students' usage and opinion of ebooks. The interview confirmed much of the data gathered in the questionnaire and demonstrated that Cambridge students have varying opinions of ebooks. The data collected from the ebook aggregators used by Cambridge University reveal that a small collection of the subscribed titles receive heavy usage, some receive modest usage and the rest receive fairly low usage.

3.2 Results

Despite the low rate of feedback from certain groups, the questionnaire clearly demonstrated that well over half of all respondents had accessed ebooks at some point during their studies (see figure 2).

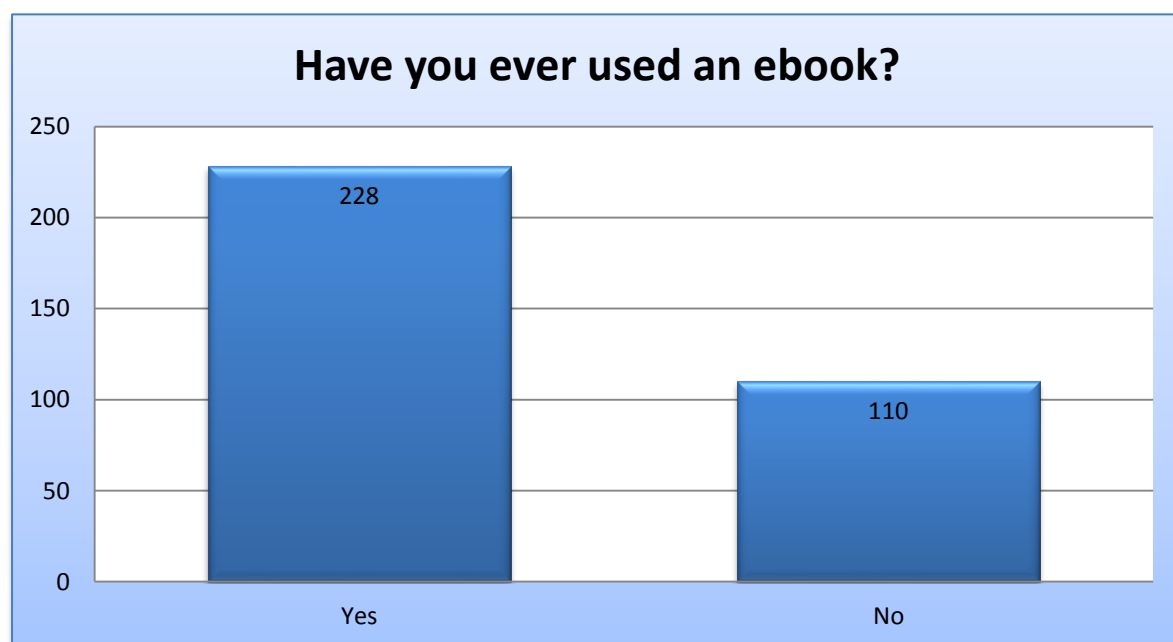


Fig. 2 Responses to question 2

This question however, does not indicate how students are actually using the ebook and therefore it fails to show whether the title was accessed to simply check a reference, rather than for any in-depth reading of the actual text. This kind of analysis is demonstrated in numerous other studies such as that conducted at the University of Denver by Michael Levine-Clark. The Superbook project has delved much further than this using the raw server logs from ebook suppliers and providing a deep-log analysis of user behaviour. This deep log analysis (DLA) is also being used in the JISC project.

The reasons for non-usage vary and question three in the survey asked those students who do not use ebooks their reasons why. Respondents were asked to mark all that applied. Figure 3 presents these reasons:

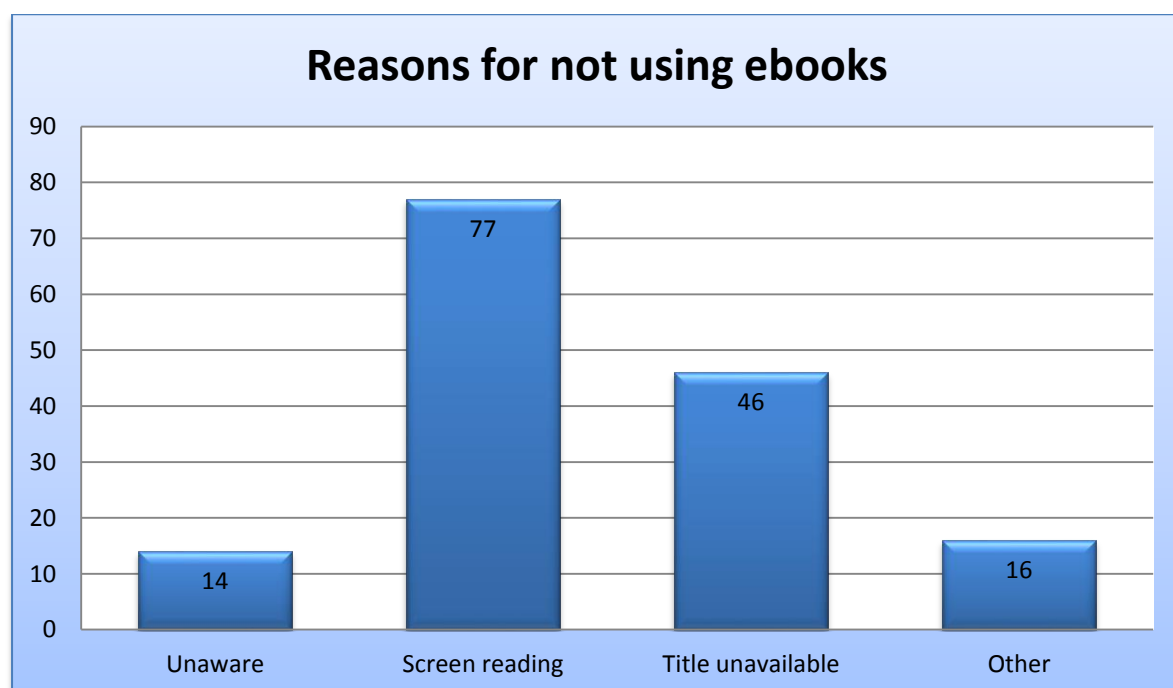


Fig. 3 Reasons for not using ebooks

It is evident that a large proportion of respondents are dissuaded from using ebooks by their requirement to read most of the text on screen. Only 9%/14 respondents expressed that they were unaware of the ebook collection, which was a positive result. The additional comments provided by those who had selected 'other,'

included the fact that they had found it unnecessary to access ebooks as enough material was located in print books and ejournals:

- *'Majority of reading needed was available in ejournals'*
- *'Could find all necessary readings in the library or on ejournals'*

Additionally, many respondents explained that they did not understand how to access them, with one response saying that they thought an e-reader was required. Despite these misunderstandings, 107 respondents (88%) said 'yes' when asked in question four if they would consider using ebooks for their studies.

The interview offered very similar results and suggested that there were three main reasons as to why students preferred not to use ebooks for their studies. Firstly, a lack of awareness of their actual existence, secondly, it was recognized that a large majority of people have an intense dislike for on screen reading and where possible prefer printed books and lastly, ease of access. Cambridge students are currently recommended to access titles within the ebook collection from the Newton Online Public Access Catalogue. However, to actually gain access and read the ebook involves several rather convoluted steps – searching the catalogue, selecting the correct record and then clicking through several times and logging on if off-campus. If access is not made easier and far more intuitive, levels of frustration may rise causing users to avoid using ebooks wherever possible.

Of those respondents who had used ebooks, 100 (43%) had used one to two ebooks whilst 77 (33%) had used five or more. 55 (24%) respondents reported that they had used 3-4 titles. Despite earlier comments regarding the dislike of reading on screen, of the 232 respondents who answered question six (*How did you read the ebook?*), 159 (69%) answered that they read the ebook(s) on screen with only five (2%) printing a section and 68 (29%) doing both. Question nine asked ebook users how much of the ebook they had read. Figure 4 shows these results.

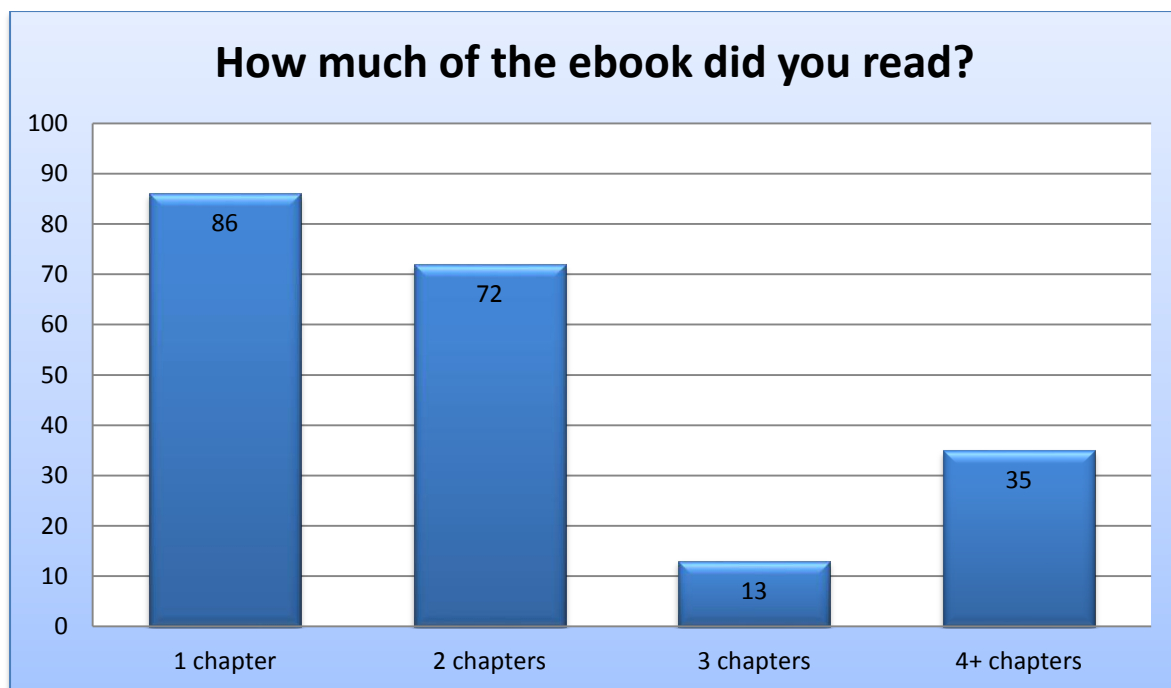


Fig. 4 How much of an ebook is read

Out of 219 replies to question 12 (*Do you prefer electronic or printed books?*), 133 (60.7%) respondents clearly stated that they preferred printed books; 36 (16.5%) showed a strong preference for electronic books whilst the remaining 50 respondents (22.8%) said that they were unable to choose between the two as they liked and used both for different reasons. The second part of this question asked for reasons why respondents preferred ebooks or printed books. The results provided a varied and interesting insight into students' thoughts on ebooks. Table I overleaf, provides the details of respondents reasons for preferring ebooks. The column on the right details how many respondents concurred on the same point.

Reasons for ebook preference	No.
Off-campus access	19
Easier to obtain (reduces need to visit Library)	18
Search facility	14
24hr access from anywhere	12
Convenience	9
Simultaneous use	9
Highlight and annotate printed sections	7
Instant availability	7
Space saving/portable	7
Useful for quick reference	5
Environmentally friendly	4
Print off sections	4
Keep them for as long as necessary	3
Copy and paste sections	2
Good for note taking	2
Check relevance before seeking the printed book	1
Cost less	1
Use as many as needed in one go	1

Table I. Reasons for ebook preference

It is clear that the majority of respondents preferred ebooks as they were available off-campus. This was to be expected since a large proportion of Faculty courses are based away from the University campus. However, a selection of the respondents explained that they would prefer printed books but, because of the nature of their

course, they had no choice other than to use ebooks in order to access the texts that they required. For example, two respondents said

- *'I would always prefer printed books but during this course, the distance from Cambridge made ebooks far more convenient.'*
- *'This year, I don't know how I would have managed without ebooks - there simply isn't time during the PGCE course to spend hours trying to find things in a library.'*

3.3 Literature review & discussion

Vast quantities of data have been collected on the usage of ebooks, the majority of which have examined the frequency of use and the quantity that is read online at any one time. Other than the Superbook Project and the National Ebook Observatory Project recently completed by the JISC, no other study has yet examined the raw server logs from ebook suppliers and provided a deep log analysis of user's exact behaviour. Further studies using the DLA method would allow for more realistic data to be gathered on ebook usage. This in-depth behaviour analysis would enable librarians to develop more effective promotional techniques and user education programmes, which would train students to use ebooks more efficiently. Furthermore, this detailed knowledge would enable ebook vendors to refine the usability of their products, adapting them to fulfil user needs.

This absence of DLA however, does not indicate a weakness in the data collected. On the contrary, the research conducted thus far provides invaluable information on ebook usage despite each piece of research offering slightly different results. Ebrary, for example, encouraged 2,600 individual institutions to take part in their global ebook survey and in 2007 obtained a total of 583 completed surveys from 552 individual libraries (p. 1). The results revealed that 88% either owned or subscribed to ebooks, demonstrating a high level of awareness of this format of information resource. Although this survey was on a far larger scale, these particular results concur with the data gathered from the questionnaire within this study; that being that the majority of students do access ebooks at some point during their studies. The final report from the JISC National Ebook Observatory Project has also demonstrated that 'nearly 65% of teaching staff and students have used an ebook to support their work or study or for leisure purposes' (p. 5). Conversely, Abdullah and

Gibb found that 'a majority of students (60%, 823 out of 1,372) had not used an ebook before the survey' (2008a, p. 598). Likewise, Anuradha and Usha found that only 37 out of their 104 respondents had used ebooks during the trial period established in their institution (p. 48). Furthermore, in ebrary's 2008 Global Student Ebook Survey, 3132 (out of 6452) respondents reported that they never used the ebooks provided to them by their library service. This lack of consistency and variation of results across academic institutions demonstrates that ebooks currently receive different levels of usage and, therefore, no one set of results can be applied across the board.

Despite the inconsistency in the numbers of university students who are actually using ebooks, their reasons for non-usage demonstrate a higher level of uniformity, with many studies reporting the same reasons as to why students do not like ebooks. Within the data collected for this dissertation, almost half of the 153 respondents to question three – *What are your reasons for not using ebooks?* - explained that they did not like reading on screen. This opinion was reinforced and demonstrated further by the additional comments provided in question 12 which asked respondents *Do you prefer electronic books or printed books and why?* Comments included:

- *'electronic books are harder to read because of the nature of computer screens'*
- *'I do not like reading from the screen.'*

Similarly, in research conducted by Chu in 2003, the most frequent reason for not using ebooks was that they were 'hard to read and browse' (p. 342) and although not the top reason, ebrary's global ebook survey closely echoed these findings. Furthermore, the JISC National Ebook Observatory Project also found that 'the biggest disadvantage by far was thought to be the difficulties of reading from the screen' (p. 41). Not only does screen reading become uncomfortable after extended periods, the respondents in the data gathered for this dissertation also reported practical difficulties, explaining that general navigation, note taking and highlighting relevant parts of a text is made more difficult when working from a computer screen:

- *'[Printed books are] easier to make notes from and use quickly'*
- *'Printed books – is easier to go back to the page where you found the information'*

- *'It's easier to find what you're looking for and to move between different chapters'*

In contrast to this, from their 2008 survey, Springer found that 'the primary obstacle to ebook usage was a lack of awareness' (p. 3). Contrary to this, the results of the questionnaire in this research show that only 9% of respondents did not use ebooks because they were unaware of them. This indicates that ebooks are being treated differently by library and information services across institutions. Only five overseas institutions participated in the Springer survey but it is evident from the results that little emphasis was being placed on alerting students to the resources on offer. Similarly, in the Global Student Ebook Survey conducted in 2008 by ebrary, it was found that whilst the majority of respondents (3713) answered 'yes' when asked 'Does your library have ebooks', 606 and 2173 answered 'no' or 'I don't know' respectively. This highlights the necessity of and effects that promotion can have on ebook usage; an aspect to be investigated later.

Despite an intense dislike for reading on screen, when asked in question six *'How did you read the ebook'*, the majority (69%/159 individuals) reported that they read the ebook on screen. Just 2% (5 individuals) answered that they printed a section, leaving 29% of respondents undertaking a combination of both. This can be seen elsewhere in the literature with Anuradha and Usha explaining that 'most of the respondents in our survey read their books on the screen, although a few printed the material' (p. 58). Similarly, findings from the first benchmarking user survey carried out by the JISC in January 2008 found that 53% of ebook users only read from the screen (p. 3). This may partly be explained by how ebooks are actually being used and for what purposes. Question nine in the survey asked participants *'How much of the ebook did you read?'* The majority of respondents (39%) said that they read one chapter and 32% answered that they read two chapters. Only 13% and 16% answered that they read three and four or more chapters respectively. Therefore, it may be suggested that whilst ebook users do not like reading on screen, they are willing to do so for short time periods or to locate specific information. This concurs with other research in the field. The results obtained by Abdullah and Gibb, for example, indicate that students use ebooks for 'reference purposes and that they were not used for extended reading' (2008b, p. 676). Similarly, Levine-Clark's study demonstrated that 56.5% usually read just a single chapter within a book, 36.4%

indicated that they read a single entry or just a few pages whilst only 7.1% said that they read the entire ebook (p. 11). These studies concur with data presented in the final report from the JISC National Ebook Observatory Project which shows that users 'consume ebooks in small chunks' (p. 17). This information shows that whilst students are willing to use ebooks for their studies, their behaviour differs from that employed when studying from a print book.

It is evident from the data collected that despite ebooks receiving a moderate amount of usage from Faculty students, printed books are by far the favoured medium. A brief analysis of the reservation system within the Faculty of Education Library indicates that titles which are available as ebooks continue to be requested in print. Indeed, from in-house statistics indicating which books have been reserved the most, of the first 25 titles listed, four are also available as ebooks. Furthermore, even after students are informed of the existence of an ebook counterpart, many still wish to continue with their request for the printed version even if it means waiting up to a week to borrow the book. These points indicate a lack of popularity of this information source. This is reinforced by the results of the questionnaire which indicated that the majority of respondents held a preference for printed books with just 16.5% answering that they preferred ebooks. Bailey concurs with this opinion, reporting from his study conducted between 2000 and 2004 that 'user attitude surveys regarding electronic formats found that users prefer printed material' (p. 53). Similarly, Langston explains in the results of the California State University ebook pilot project that 62% of respondents indicated a preference for a printed book with only 38% preferring electronic. Additionally, when Langston's study asked respondents to rate 'overall satisfaction in having a particular book available in electronic format' (p. 29), only 17% responded that they were 'very pleased', thus indicating that ebooks have yet to establish a high level of popularity with the majority. In addition to this, although the results of Croft and Bedi's study did not indicate a clear preference for printed books over electronic, many of the anecdotal comments offered by the respondents indicated that printed books were the preferred medium (p. 122). Furthermore, almost 45% of respondents expressed that they only used an ebook because that was the only available format (p. 123).

Whilst user attitudes remain this way, it is difficult to see how ebooks could ever become a dominant information medium within academic libraries. Furthermore, this preference for printed books demonstrates a need for advances in the technology used to encourage usage. The data from the interview, which was based on usage statistics obtained by the main ebook aggregators, indicated that ebook usage mimicked print book usage to a certain extent. That is not to say that the ebooks in Cambridge are used as much as their print counterpart but that usage was similar to the extent that it varied from term to term depending on the course curriculum, and each year it was explained that there was a certain percentage of ebooks that did not receive any usage, much like a print collection. Data supplied by the ebook aggregators indicated that education ebooks were one of the highest used overall, with four titles in the top 20 for 2008-2009. This usage suggests a promising situation whereby as users become more familiar with ebooks, they may develop into the preferred information medium.

In conclusion, it is evident that as yet there is little or no consistency across institutions when examining ebook usage. This demonstrates a necessity to investigate usage alongside other ebook aspects; indicating that achieving acceptable levels of usage is reliant on other factors such as acquisition and promotion. The right books must be selected in order to make students want to use them, and these books must be promoted to ensure that they are used.

Chapter 4: Selection & acquisition of ebooks

4.1 Introduction

In addition to the effects that ebooks can have on the end-user and the way in which they fulfil their information needs, it is evident from this study and from the literature that they also have a considerable effect on the academic librarian and, more specifically, their practices and procedures regarding collection development. Thus, expanding an academic library collection to include ebooks requires careful consideration and planning. Whilst ebooks certainly boast the potential to solve many common library problems, their selection and acquisition requires a variety of new techniques and methods which the librarian must grow to understand and adapt to in order to gain the most from the ebook collection. However, as Dillon explains, 'title selection and collection development have proven to be a slightly clumsy process akin to groping in the dark while wearing oversized mittens' (2001a, p. 120). Selecting ebooks for an academic library involves many of the same issues concerned when selecting and ordering print books such as budget, potential popularity and availability. However, in addition to this, the selection of ebooks encompasses a whole spectrum of new anxieties for the librarian to address, from publisher's licensing agreements and purchasing options to website usability and access restrictions.

4.2 Results

The interview was most successful in providing data regarding the most common practices and procedures for the acquisition of ebooks across Cambridge Libraries and revealed many issues that are also present in the literature. The interviewee explained that the lists of recommendations received from across Cambridge Libraries were usually compiled of texts that 'they have on short loan, or they're books that they know are in demand because they're looking at their most borrowed books lists or they're books that are new onto reading lists.' The interviewee also raised the issue of selection procedures, recommending that Libraries within Cambridge should move to a situation where the ebook is always taken into consideration when purchasing decisions are initially made rather than at a later date

once usage has been assessed. The interviewer also asked whether buying ebooks instead of print would ever become a possibility. The interviewee responded that this was almost a certainty within the sciences where the information that is sought differs to that required in the social sciences and humanities.

The questionnaire asked one question about the collection of education ebooks currently on offer. Positively, of the 219 responses obtained, the questionnaire demonstrated that 75% agreed that the collection of education ebooks offered access to a variety of texts. However, the questionnaire does not ask if there are other titles that users would like as ebooks.

4.3 Literature review & discussion

Selecting exactly which books to acquire in ebook format encompasses a variety of issues for the librarian to contemplate. For example, as yet, not all titles are available in ebook format which places limitations on the librarian not present when acquiring print books for the collection. Furthermore, the risks and consequences of purchasing an ebook, if demand has not already been demonstrated by print copy usage, are far greater. Whilst print books can be withdrawn from a collection and disposed of in a relatively straightforward manner, ebooks are often bought in perpetuity with little or no flexibility from the publisher to swap or amend titles within a collection. In conjunction with these concerns, it is imperative that the librarian also considers aspects such as budget - exactly how much of the overall library budget should be spent on ebooks - acquisition and cataloguing workflows, publisher deals and vendor services.

Despite these concerns, an investigation into the literature reveals that there are a variety of reasons why academic libraries initially opt to incorporate ebooks into their collections. A study conducted by Gold Leaf for the JISC indicated a prioritised list of reasons why ebooks were acquired. The questionnaire conducted revealed that when considering which ebooks to acquire, texts needed by those students who were undertaking distance learning courses took precedence as did those titles that

were out of print. The study also enquired as to which types of texts were prioritised. As expected, titles with proven heavy demand and those that had been recommended by academics were favoured, as were those that appeared on reading lists and in short loan collections (p. 56). Similarly, in their 2005 study, Armstrong and Lonsdale revealed that there were 'three principal factors' in selecting titles; 'course reading lists; high borrowing/use; and multiple paper copies' (p. 39). These findings echo those established from the interview. Furthermore, within the Faculty of Education Library, ebook purchasing decisions have been based on the usage of print copies. Thus far, all of the education ebooks selected and purchased have print counterparts available for borrowing in the Faculty Library. They have been carefully selected by analysing circulation statistics which indicate how many times a book has been borrowed and reserved. The semi-structured interview demonstrates that this is common practice across the whole of the University, with few librarians selecting titles that are not already held in print. This suggests that librarians demonstrate a more cautious attitude when it comes to purchasing ebooks. This can perhaps be explained by the cost of ebooks which, on average, are equal to the price of a hardback printed book plus 10%. Libraries who commonly wait for the paperback version to be published before buying, may hesitate before spending this amount of an ever diminishing budget, especially if it is for a text which may see little use. Thus, it would appear that the risks of purchasing ebooks are greater in number and certainly more costly.

According to the literature, one of the main concerns relating to the acquisition of ebooks is that the titles required are often not available in electronic format. In their ebook mapping exercise, Armstrong and Lonsdale report that 'a number of participants were concerned about the limited array of current titles' (p. 14). Carlock reports similar problems in her study, drawing on one comment from a professor who suggested that ebooks were not available for her subject (p. 250). This has also been demonstrated in the Faculty of Education where one of the key social science research methods texts is not available in ebook format. The book is used across a number of courses, is the most reserved/requested book in the Faculty Library and the purchase of an ebook counterpart is frequently requested by academics. Furthermore, Taylor-Roe commented that the majority of ebooks that are available

are often reference works and encyclopaedias which are not in high demand (p. 136). Interestingly enough, the study by Gold Leaf indicates that reference materials are acquired first, followed by other material. Although Dowdy explains that 'electronic books are a convenient format for reference tools' (p. 7) for example, they are not designed to be read from cover to cover and the search facilities enable a user to locate specific information with ease, if they are not the texts that students most frequently use, they are of relatively low value. The acquisitions process becomes more cumbersome and complex by the lack of availability of key texts and librarians are often left to form an ebook collection from a less than satisfactory list of titles. Unfortunately, a solution to this problem does not appear to be on the horizon as many publishers are reluctant to produce ebooks amidst fears that they will negatively impact on revenue.

A further problem with the acquisition of ebooks relates to the wide variety of purchasing options offered by publishers and the impact this can have on acquisitions workflows. Bennett explains that there is no uniformity between publishers and there are a wide range of models available, 'some of which are difficult to understand' (p. 12). Ball echoes this point by explaining that 'pricing and business models are also unusually heterogeneous. Almost no provider offers a simple, straightforward model' (p. 19). The variety of models on offer present complications rather than the luxury of choice and may indeed dissuade librarians from purchasing ebooks as they are unclear as to what they are entering into. Of the models on offer, package bundles which incorporate a selection of titles from a chosen subject area are often available and can offer good price deals. As Renner explains in an independent study, 'electronic building enabled the library to purchase more than three times the number of electronic Springer titles as it would have in print' (p. 3). However, package bundles allow for little, if any, flexibility and if the books are not those in high demand and do not prove popular amongst the reader population, librarians are left with an inadequate ebook collection which does not meet the needs of their users. As Armstrong, Edwards and Lonsdale explain 'it is not enough to find a selection of ebooks in a subject if they are not the ebooks demanded by the curriculum' (p. 221). As ebooks are costly and often bought in perpetuity, ensuring that they will be used is of utmost importance. Furthermore, as

Sinha and Tucker explain, the librarian should be wary of package bundles as ebooks are often available via multiple vendors making duplication a key concern (in Miller and Pellen eds., p. 200). Selecting the titles that form part of the bundle can overcome the problems associated with this model but this 'pick and mix' option is administratively time consuming and is not always available. Another issue for the librarian is the type of access offered. Publishers offer both limited and unlimited simultaneous access with the latter allowing any number of multiple concurrent users at any one time. This solves the multiple print copies challenge but, inevitably, it is more expensive and can be slow if numerous users are attempting to access the same book at the same time. Armstrong and Lonsdale's ebook mapping study found that 'a general, over-arching feeling amongst all groups' existed and 'there are too many models and that they are too complex' (p. 24).

Overall and as has been demonstrated, ebooks have the potential to solve many problems for both the librarian and the information seeker. However, it is not just the end-user who must adapt and familiarise themselves with the ebook, librarians too must broaden their knowledge in order to acquire ebooks and manage them in an effective way. These concerns may dissuade the librarian from incorporating ebooks into their collection and thus hinder the overall development of ebooks as an information source.

Chapter 5: Promotion & discovery of ebooks

5.1 Introduction

The promotion of any aspect of a library's collection holds considerable importance and can have dramatic effects on the way in which a collection is used. For new information formats, such as ebooks, the significance of promotion is even greater. Discovery by serendipity is less likely and therefore, failure to inform users of the information resources available to them may result in some aspects of the collection receiving little or low usage. Promotion benefits not only the library by helping to ensure that the resources acquired are actually used, but also assists the library user who may remain unaware of resources if they are not advertised. In the case of ebooks, promotion may also ensure that a distance learning student can acquire access to a particular text without visiting the physical library. Promotion comes in a variety of guises from posters in the library to notices on the webpages, to both formal and informal user education sessions.

5.2 Results

As the responsibility of marketing a collection lies with the information service, the majority of data on the promotion of the University's ebook collection was drawn from the interview with just two questions in the questionnaire focusing on this aspect. Question 11 asked participants '*Would you like more training/guidance on how to use ebooks?*' Just 29% out of 231 responses indicated that more training would be useful, suggesting that current levels of user education are satisfactory. However, only those students who already used ebooks answered this question. The percentage of respondents needing more guidance may have been far higher had those who do not use them also answered. Question 13 of the questionnaire asked participants '*How did you find out about the ebooks?*' The results to this question can be seen in figure 5 overleaf. Respondents were asked to mark all options that applied.

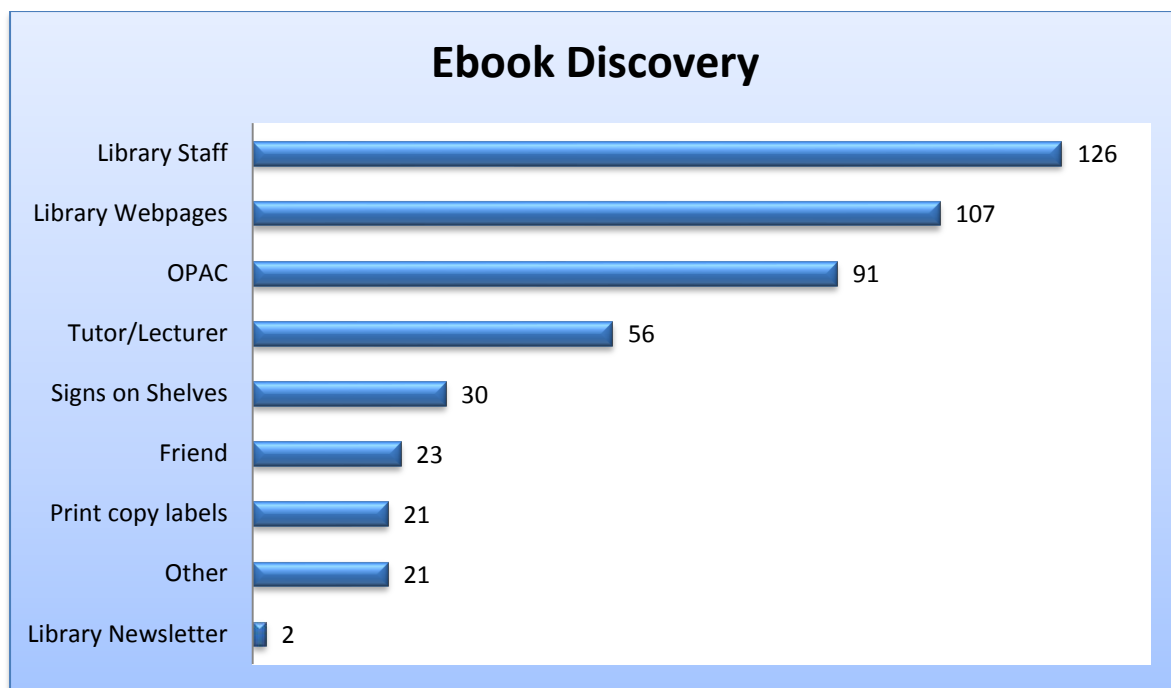


Fig. 5 Discovery of ebooks by participants

Many of the additional comments provided by respondents referred to Google books rather than the collection of ebooks subscribed to by the University and therefore it is evident that participants were unclear as to exactly which ebooks the questionnaire referred. The other comments offered a variety of responses with some reporting that they had used ebooks at previous academic institutions.

The interview asked which promotional techniques were used within the participating Cambridge Libraries. The answer provided a varied collection of ideas demonstrating that ebook promotion is taken seriously within the University and that libraries are employing a range of techniques in an attempt to ensure reasonable levels of usage. These ideas ranged from posters, bookmarks, signs on the shelves next to the physical book and labels on the books themselves, as well as the development of webpages to incorporate this aspect. The ebooks@cambridge project has developed promotional tools which are available on their website and can be used by any Cambridge Library. When asked how effective these promotional strategies had been in increasing ebook usage, the interviewee replied that they were, but only up to point. However, those Faculty/Department libraries, such as Education, that had carried out the most intensive promotional strategies were those

whose books had received the heaviest usage. Interestingly enough, the interviewee highlighted the importance of conveying information about ebooks to students and faculty exactly at the point when they need to know it. This is indeed the case and is an extremely valid remark. Whilst it is helpful to have promotional techniques in place throughout the year, a new medium such as ebooks can be easily forgotten and thus targeting users when they need the information is key, although undoubtedly difficult to achieve. It was added that the user education sessions conducted for Cambridge Librarians at the main University Library were popular with good attendance rates.

5.3 Literature review & discussion

On the surface, it may appear unnecessary to promote academic library collections as many students will come ready equipped with a list of readings provided to them by a member of academic staff. However, when one investigates this notion further, it becomes apparent that the absence of promotional techniques within academic libraries can lead to areas of the collection being underused and can result in large numbers of students drawing on the same assortment of texts with little or no variety. It is important to promote new material to provide library users with the opportunity to read wider than their reading lists and to encourage academics to recommend newly published works that are often far easier to obtain. When a new type of information resource is introduced into a collection, it is increasingly important to advertise its existence to all library users. As Lonsdale and Armstrong explain, 'it is not enough to put resources in place and expect students and academic users to come to them' (no pagination). They continue to say that

In the context of e-books, it might be argued that the marketing and promotion is even more critical since there is an even greater lack of awareness and understanding by academic staff and students [...] of this relatively new format (no date, no pagination).

Many ebook studies have investigated ways in which libraries have promoted ebook collections, how users have discovered them and from where they have been accessed. The data collected from this questionnaire indicated that library staff were the most common way in which users discovered ebooks. The library webpages and

the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) followed as the next two most popular ways of accessing the collection. The JISC 2008 benchmarking survey found similar results with the library website being the most cited way in which users (students and faculty) discovered ebooks. The library OPAC was the second most common way but library staff, however, were fourth. The popularity of both the Library website and the OPAC presents itself in other survey findings. Ebrary's Global Ebook Survey for example, reported that the OPAC was the most common way in which library users find ebooks with the library webpages the second most frequent point of discovery. They explain that 'the catalog is at present the primary way that students find ebooks. It is doing a better job promoting ebooks than anything else' (p. 4). These results are echoed by Armstrong and Lonsdale who in 2005 stated that 'across all disciplines the predominant modes of access are from the ILS website and the OPAC, with approximately equal use of each' (p. 42). The importance of the appearance of ebook records in the Library OPAC is emphasised further by Dillon who explains that 'after adding MARC records to the catalog [...] usage increased immediately' (2001b, p. 357).

Although cited as the fourth most common way of discovering ebooks in this questionnaire, it is evident from the literature that academic staff play a significant part in the promotion and marketing of university ebook collections. Endorsement and recommendation from a tutor appears to encourage students to access ebooks thus helping to increase their usage. For example, Armstrong and Lonsdale report the importance of academic staff in their 2005 study by quoting one of their respondents who said that 'if an academic recommends it and says it's available electronically, it's half way there to getting the students to use it really' (p. 43). Taylor concurs with this opinion reporting in her case study at the University of Worcester that 'the link with lecturers has been the most successful way to promote the ebooks' (p. 225). However, the 'vast majority of faculty today were schooled in a print culture' (Horava in Miller and Pellen eds., p. 167) and many remain ignorant of new information sources and are reluctant or unable to recommend the unfamiliar to their students. In a report prepared by Gold Leaf for the JISC in 2003, the authors conducted a questionnaire with faculty and when asked about recommending ebooks to students, one reply received was 'I'm not likely to' (p. 73). In the same

study, 68 academics across a range of UK Universities were asked if they used ebooks. Of the 68 academics asked, only one of these was an ebook user. The rest provided a variety of responses with 38 commenting that they were unaware of ebooks as a medium (p. 41). In ebrary's Global Faculty Ebook Survey conducted in 2007, 319 questionnaire respondents answered that they do not currently integrate ebooks into their courses (p. 14). Therefore, although the literature clearly demonstrates that faculty has the potential to have a significantly positive impact on the usage of ebooks, the reality in many cases is that they are not yet recommending this information medium to their students. An analysis of Cambridge University academics and their usage of ebooks would be interesting to conduct.

Promotion as a whole is vital in ensuring acceptable levels of ebook usage and thus librarians must make every effort to liaise with academic staff at their institution and make a collaborative effort to promote the ebooks to the students. It is incontrovertible that promotion is a key component in assisting ebooks to meet their maximum potential and increasing usage and that without it, academic libraries would see a much lower rate of usage, leading librarians to question the actual worth of an ebook collection.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The objectives of the dissertation were four-fold and from analysing the results obtained from the data collection and literature review, it would be fair to suggest that these objectives have been soundly met. The current extent of ebook usage within the Faculty of Education Library has been clearly demonstrated. Similarly, the effects that ebook acquisition can have on the librarian have been carefully examined and the importance of promotion has been thoroughly explained and verified. The overall aim of the dissertation has also been met. From an examination of the literature and analysis of the results from the interview and questionnaire, it is evident that, thus far, students have a very mixed opinion of ebooks. Whilst a few use them heavily throughout their studies and consider them a valuable information source, the majority still prefer printed books, only using the ebook when absolutely necessary. Problems raised by the acquisition of ebooks have also been investigated and the dissertation demonstrates that whilst the incorporation of ebooks into an academic library collection can solve many problems, it also creates multiple concerns; publisher deals are often complicated, varying from one company to the next, and budgetary concerns remain a contentious issue. The librarian must be able and willing to adapt to new methods and procedures regarding acquisition. The importance of promotion within an academic library is unquestionable and even more pertinent when introducing a new information resource into the collection. The librarian must ensure that ebooks are advertised appropriately to all library users, using a variety of techniques. This will help to ensure that the collection receives as much use as possible, confirming its worth and also providing users with access to the information they need.

Much of the literature echoed those findings apparent in the interview and questionnaire conducted for this dissertation. It clearly demonstrates reluctance amongst library users to rely on the ebook when seeking information. Studies by Abdullah and Gibb and Anuradha and Usha indicate that the majority of their respondents had not used ebooks. Furthermore, it showed distinct similarities in the reasons why students do not like using ebooks with both Chu and the JISC National Ebook Observatory Project, along with this research, indicating that reading on screen was the most highlighted reason.

The methods employed to conduct this research were those best suited to the nature of the study. Restrictions were imposed by student attendance patterns and as a result, distributing the questionnaire by e-mail proved to be the only viable way to collect the data. However, a higher, more valid response rate could potentially be achieved by directly engaging with the students rather than distributing the questionnaire by e-mail. Addressing the students in person before they completed the questionnaire would have ensured that participants had a full understanding of the questions being asked. Focus groups may also have been beneficial and would have enabled one to gather in-depth opinion from a collection of students. Furthermore, obtaining support from academic staff may have encouraged more students to respond. Whilst the questionnaire was distributed to all Faculty students who were undertaking a variety of courses, they all independently decided whether to take part or not and thus the results comprised of a high response rate by some courses and a very low response rate from others. It would be beneficial to also research the opinions of those respondents who said that they did not use ebooks and discover why this was. This could aid in developing and expanding the ebook collection and also help to develop promotional strategies to ensure that all Faculty students are aware of the existence of an ebook at the point when they need to use it.

The semi-structured interview allowed the interviewer to obtain information on specific aspects and also permitted the interviewee to raise other points of interest. As the ebooks@cambridge project is run collaboratively across the University, conducting the interview with the project coordinator proved most satisfactory. Lastly, employing two different methodologies ensured that the perspectives and opinions of both the library user and librarian were obtained. Whilst the questionnaire collated user opinion, the interview gave the academic librarian a voice and together they enabled the aims and objectives to be met. However, whilst the study produced a valid set of responses it would be difficult to generalise them across all ebook users or, indeed, to all ebook users within Cambridge.

Undoubtedly, academic libraries are endeavouring to embrace the ebook and offer their users access to a wider range of material in a variety of formats. However,

ebooks present such a multitude of difficulties for both the academic librarian and the library user that they are taking a significant amount of time to have a high impact within the profession. As Rafael Ball explains:

the use of ebooks has become a matter of course in an academic library; it is part and parcel of a professional media mix [...] However, printed books will not be replaced by ebooks – they will always retain the huge advantage that they can be used everywhere without any technological aids (p. 22).

For the time being this indeed seems to be the case; perhaps in the future, when academics and students are schooled in a generation of ebooks, the medium will become more familiar, increasing in popularity and creating fewer reasons to shy away from it.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Questionnaire e-mails

1. Initial invitation e-mail

Dear Student,

I work in the Faculty of Education Library and I am currently undertaking a Distance Learning Masters Degree in Librarianship with the University of Aberystwyth. I am writing a dissertation on ebooks and their usage and effect in academic libraries and I would like to ask for your help.

I would really appreciate it if you would complete this short questionnaire for me. It shouldn't take you any more than 10 minutes to complete but your comments are essential for my dissertation. Please would you take part even if you have never used an ebook.

You can access the questionnaire at: [link] The closing date for your feedback is Wednesday 10th June. You may receive further reminders before that date.

Please note that all information submitted to this questionnaire is completely confidential and I will not be able to identify which comments belong to which students. You are asked to log in solely to ensure that you see the correct survey. The results will form part of my dissertation, a copy of which will be held in Aberystwyth University Library.

Thank you very much for your time.

Louisa Brown

2. Reminder E-mail

Dear student,

It's not too late to help me with my Masters dissertation by completing my short questionnaire. You can access the questionnaire at: [link]

I work in the Faculty of Education Library and I am currently undertaking a Distance Learning Masters Degree in Librarianship with the University of Aberystwyth. I am writing a dissertation on ebooks and their usage and effect in academic libraries and I would like to ask for your help.

I would really appreciate it if you would complete this short questionnaire for me. It shouldn't take you any more than 10 minutes to complete but your comments are essential for my dissertation. Please would you take part even if you have never used an ebook.

The closing date for your feedback is Wednesday 10th June. You may receive further reminders before that date.

Please note that all information submitted to this questionnaire is completely confidential and I will not be able to identify which comments belong to which students. You are asked to log in solely to ensure that you see the correct survey. The results will form part of my dissertation, a copy of which will be held in Aberystwyth University Library.

Thank you very much for your time.

Louisa Brown

Appendix B – Questionnaire Responses

1. What course are you undertaking?	338 responses
<i>Undergraduate</i>	63 (19%)
<i>PGCE Early Years & Primary</i>	43 (13%)
<i>PGCE KS2/3</i>	8 (2%)
<i>PGCE Secondary</i>	70 (21%)
<i>MPhil full-time</i>	32 (9%)
<i>MEd part-time</i>	64 (19%)
<i>Masters Distance</i>	8 (2%)
<i>PhD</i>	50 (15%)
2. Have you ever used an ebook?	338 responses
If yes, please state which one(s) using the comment box below	
<i>Yes (now go to question 5)</i>	228 (67%)
<i>No (now go to question 3)</i>	110 (33%)
3. What are your reasons for not using ebooks?	116 responses
Please mark all that apply	
<i>Was unaware of them</i>	14 (12%)
<i>Do not like reading on screen</i>	77 (66%)
<i>The book needed was not available as an ebook</i>	46 (40%)
<i>Other (please specify in the comment box below)</i>	16 (14%)

Comments:

- a. Found confusing with download etc
- b. Majority of reading needed was available in ejournals
- c. I guess I've never bothered to find out just how I might access an e-book. It sounds great, but how do I get started?
- d. The books I have found available as ebooks are also in the library, and since I find reading on screen logistically difficult - I don't always have access to a computer - I would usually choose to wait for the hard copy to become available.
- e. It had never entered my head until now that I should be looking for e-books. I don't know where I would access them. If I had access to a paper version I would prefer it, I think.
- f. Have as yet to get round to it.
- g. Sometimes a system fault did not allow me to access the book at a crucial moment. Also you can't read them on the train.
- h. Wasn't able to access from home.
- i. Not fully aware of which books are available and how to access them.
- j. Could find all necessary readings in the library or on ejournals
- k. Haven't found the need
- l. Was sort of aware of them because I have seen them listed on the library pages but I am not really clear on how to manage them- being a part time student with a full time job etc. time is a constraint so I have not followed up and found out more. It is quicker to use old methods! Partly put off by the fact that I prefer to read from documents rather than a screen too. Even when I download material I tend to print a hard copy because it is easier for me to work with.
- m. They are not very easy to access
- n. They are not yet my first or second port of call when looking for information.
- o. My eye sight not too good and so I avoid straining them if I can by avoiding computer glare.
- p. Not sure how to access them
- q. Not needed to use a book electronically yet, but may do in the future
- r. Always have difficulty in locating ebooks and journals.
- s. I assume that to use an e-book I need an e-reader, which sadly I don't possess.

4. Would you consider using ebooks for your studies?	121 responses
If no, please explain why in the comment box below	
Yes	107 (88%)
No	14 (12%)
Your part in this questionnaire is now complete. Thank you for taking part.	
5. How many ebooks have you used?	232 responses
1-2	100 (43%)
3-4	55 (24%)
5+	77 (33%)
6. How did you read the ebook?	232 responses
On screen	159 (69%)
Printed a section	5 (2%)
Both	68 (29%)
7. Did you experience problems when using the ebook?	232 responses
Yes	87 (38%)
No	145 (63%)
8. If yes, were they problems with	90 responses
Logging in	11 (12%)
Viewing the ebook	41 (46%)
Downloading	16 (18%)
Printing	11 (12%)
Other (please specify in the comment box below)	11 (12%)
9. How much of the ebook did you read?	222 responses
1 chapter	86 (39%)
2 chapters	72 (32%)
3 chapters	29 (13%)
4+ chapters	35 (16%)
10. Do you think that the collection of education ebooks offers access to a variety of texts?	219 responses
Yes	165 (75%)
No (if no, please indicate which books you would like as ebooks in the comment box below)	54 (25%)
11. Would you like more training/guidance on how to use ebooks?	231 responses
Yes	67 (29%)
No	164 (71%)

12. Do you prefer electronic books or printed books and why? 219 responses

- a. Electronic books are easier to access usually.
- b. Not as such but the ease of access and instant availability make them very useful with short deadlines as well as being able to have a rummage and see what might be there. Perhaps not as rigorous a reference selection process but still pretty good.
- c. Printed - don't like reading on the screen/printing of lots of paper
- d. Printed books because they are much easier to read than on the computer screen.
- e. Printed - far easier, quicker and more efficient to use. You don't get a headache reading them!
- f. E-books have the edge, purely because of the ability to get them 'instantly' at 4am and/or on deadline day without a trip to the library.
- g. I like being able to find things almost instantly using the 'find' tool on the computer, I can find write down the relevant page numbers and get the real book out of the library to read (I do not like staring at the screen for long periods of time). If I have forgotten to reference something in an essay ebooks are extremely useful at the last minute!
- h. That is very hard to answer as there are pros and cons with both! If I HAVE to choose I suppose that (assuming I had access to any ebook I wanted) then for academic work (assuming I have access to a large screen to read from) overall I prefer electronic as I can: 1) get them immediately, 2) keep them for as long as I like, 3) print off bits I need 4) have as many as I want at one time 5) highlight and annotate on the bits I print 6) save them into files which go along with notes so I can always find what I want 7) Search for key words or phrases (much more powerful than index in a printed book) For pleasure then I would MUCH rather have printed books as I find them: 1) more pleasurable to read 2) a much better sensory experience 3) easier to read in bed (where I most often read for pleasure) 4) satisfying to collect (I have a house full of printed books) Although I like the convenience of ebooks I love using libraries to browse and work in and feel it would be a great cultural loss if we only had ebooks! I really like the Faculty of Ed library and the UL is one of my favourite places in the whole world!
- i. Printed books. Electronic books are harder to read because of the nature of computer screens and the time lag involved in turning pages.
- j. ebooks are useful for a quick, distance reference if you are lucky enough to be able to access the book you need. printed books are easier to flick through, read wherever ... I will undoubtedly use ebooks more fully as more become available and there is a greater expectation of a desired book being available
- k. Printed books-I care about my eyes! But as I said before I do think it is a handy service if you can't get to the library or someone has the book you want
- l. Printed books are easier to use because I can read and type at the same time without having to shift between screens.
- m. I prefer printed books. Printed books are accessible at any time and place. I can underline and make notes. The battery does not run out.
- n. Ebooks can be good if books are on loan in the library. It can be hard to read them on screen though and when you print it is not good for the environment or the student printer cartridge budget.
- o. No preference - they are useful in different ways. Books are better: to read in particular places (trains, planes, bed); when I want to read the whole of a book (easier on the eyes). ebooks are better: to search for particular words/phrases; to copy and paste quotes and citations
- p. Electronic because it allows simultaneous use of the book. There's nothing worse than needing a book which someone else has already taken out of the library!
- q. Sometimes, yes- if it would be possible to print chapter, then I could mark the book myself, unlike the regular library book. For popular books, it would also be useful as I often don't have access to what I need during key (busy) points of the year. I still prefer real books for life, however!
- r. Printed books...so i can photocopy sections or chapters, and underline or annotate on them.
- s. Printed books because I get very tired when reading more than a few pages on screen.
- t. Both are fine. I still prefer to have the pleasure of holding a book though
- u. Printed books - faster to navigate and to annotate (with post-its etc in case of library books).
- v. Electronic books for ease of obtaining; printed books because they are nicer to read. E-books can be hard to read large chunks of on the screen, but printing costs can be inhibitive.
- w. Printed ones because I can hold the papers and read better, take notes without using the mouse to move pages etc.

x. I starting to get the hang of the electronic books but I still go back to the printed books because I need to touch the pages (its real), read the book during my time (not having to go and log on and then get to the part of the book that I need to read about), and believe it or not I just love the smell of the textbooks - its authentic...and historical to hold a book in ones hand.

y. I prefer printed books myself as they do not involve sitting at a PC which can cause back/eye strain. However i like the 24-hour access that ebooks give. I also use eBooks that are not provided by my library, but are on portable devices. I think that these have really helped me to make reading portable and easily available

z. This year, I don't know how I would have managed without ebooks - there simply isn't time during the course of the PGCE to spend hours trying to find things in a library. Moreover, there isn't the space in my bag to fit in lesson plans, resources, my computer and a whole load of books when I go to school in the morning. The only problem with them is that, of course, using them is contingent upon the network not going down, or in my case, the county's server not refusing you access.

aa. I used an e-book when no other printed copies of that text, which was an assigned reading for the course, were available. This is was more out of necessity than preference. I think I'd still prefer printed books because I find it difficult to read from the screen, you can't flip through the ebook with the same ease and as quickly as you can with a printed copy and it is too costly on paper and ink to have to print out a paper copy of an ebook. So ebooks seem like a great backup but not a preference.

ab. Both have their benefits in my opinion. I generally prefer printed books as I find them easier to read, they have the possibility to be photocopied etc. Ebooks however, I have found useful when a printed book is unavailable, the library is closed or I just want to quickly find something I know I've read before. I also generally read ebooks on my computer which I find more difficult so may print them in future.

ac. No, I am quite a traditionalist when it comes to reading. I still like flipping through the pages of a book and a book is also more reader-friendly in terms of layout and font size.

ad. Definitely printed -they are hard to read on screen and expensive to print out. However, it's brilliant to be able to access e-books to check the content - especially if you are following up a reference from another source- this way you can see if the book is relevant before looking for a hard copy of the book.

ae. Printed is better as it's easier to read, but due to living a really long way from Cambridge and working such long hours that I can't get to any libraries, I rely on ebooks.

af. Printed books. Easier to make notes from and use quickly.

ag. Certainly printed books - they ARE books! Just like a person might go to a museum to see the real thing rather than pictures of objects on a screen, one might naturally prefer to read from the real thing - i.e. a real printed book!

ah. I prefer printed books because you can hold them in your hand and choose to reveal the picture before or after reading the text. Children can look at them independently after the shared reading session. You don't have to rely on technology or worry about the sunlight shining on the board.

ai. Printed - because I am often reading in bed once my small children have gone to sleep.

aj. For quick references and looking up information when I'm out of the faculty I think electronic books would be useful. However, I prefer hard copies of books in general. For writing my assignments, I find it useful to have easy access to hard copies of books that I can keep out on loan for extended periods of time so that I can reference to them when needed without having to go through the process of logging on and finding the ebook online. This is because I often want to easily refer to the same book again and again, so it's quick and easy if it's on my desk! Also, when using a book for an assignment, I need to have a window open on the computer for writing the assignment. So it's nice to have the book in paper form, then I don't have to keep changing between screens. And I can take hard copies easily on the train with me!

ak. Prefer printed but live outside of Cambridge so ebooks are more convenient

al. Printed books - adaptable, can carry anywhere, ebooks difficult to read in bed etc

am. I like both for different reasons. Electronic books make my eyes ache after a while (a problem which could be solved by printing it out, but that uses a lot of paper and therefore money!). Electronic books are extremely useful in that you are able to search them more quickly, find relevant passages etc. In terms of usefulness and convenience I would say I prefer electronic books.

an. Printed books, electronic books are more difficult to read, my eyes get sore and I cannot mark the pages (as I would with printed journal papers)

ao. Printed books as it gives me a break from the screen!! They're easier to read and flick between sections

ap. Printed, it is easier to read them, my eyes hurt when I look at a screen too long

aq. Broadly, I prefer working from printed books - I like the feel of the book, easily being able to flick through pages etc. But interestingly, if a book is available in ebook form and in printed book form, I will choose the ebook as its less hassle in terms of going to the library and remembering to take the book back on time etc

ar. As above.....I HATE reading ebooks & much prefer printed books. I hate reading extended material on the computer, scrolling down, waiting for the next page to load, then having to go between screens to type my notes - it is such a horribly cumbersome process. So, even as an isolated phenomenon, I would hate reading ebooks because I think it is an inefficient way of reading. As an aside, I do like the physicality of the artefact that is a printed book, so would always chose to refer to a book I can hold - but this affection is not why I don't like ebooks (though you may interpret it as such!!). Contrary to some schools of thought, I think that ebooks are undemocratic and restricting - they require you to know what you are looking for and make browsing, cross-referencing and chance discoveries infinitely more difficult.

as. Printed books. I find it easier to read a hard copy. It seems difficult to me to read from the screen

at. Electronic books as it is more environmental friendly.

au. I really value being able to access the books electronically (any place, any time) but prefer to read text when it is printed rather than on the screen.

av. I find printed books are easier to read, particularly in the evenings.

aw. Printed books because I find them nicer to read and more portable.

ax. Printed. They have soul. They present a completely different value of knowledge. E-texts are shorn of most of the specificities through which books come alive through their details and contexts. A printed book can be skimmed much more efficiently than an e-book, despite the facility of the latter to be Ctrl+Fed. Also, computers are horrible things to sit anywhere near for any length of time, and the rooms they are generally sited in make me want to commit murders. Real books can be taken to a café, or read out on the grass on a sunny afternoon. Some of the libraries in Cambridge take a bit of getting used to, but they are awesome resources, and anything that might threaten to supplant them or divert their funding is to be resisted strenuously.

ay. Printed. I do not like reading from the screen.

az. I think they are complementary, depending on the situation it is more convenient to use one or the other

ba. Printed Books - as don't like reading off a screen as find it distracting/easily distracted by checking emails and such.

bb. Printed - I find it harder to read on paper and they're usually much easier to find!

bc. I MUCH prefer printed books. They're more convenient to read in bed (yes I sometimes work from bed), but mainly I like to be able to skim read quite often, just glancing over the first sentence of each paragraph, and ebooks are just WAY too slow for this to be convenient.

bd. I generally prefer electronic books as I can easily find the exact part of the book required whatever time of day it is (not restricted to Library Hours) I also like the fact that I can print it out and highlight important bits etc

be. Printed books - easier to skim read and use index.

bf. Electronic - ease of access and ease of taking quotations.

bg. Printed books, much more accessible and easier to read

bh. Printed books because they are less tiring to read

bi. Printed books, as Index page can be used for looking up key words and the matching page numbers.

bj. Electronic books are great if you are off campus - but we don't have off campus access to most of the ebooks on the library website - kind of defeating the point of an ebook!

bk. I prefer printed books, as I do not enjoy reading from a screen, and feel that it is wasteful for each reader to print out large sections of e-books. I also prefer printed books as you can take them with you and work anywhere (I do a lot of work on trains), rather than being limited to somewhere with an internet connection and power supply.

bl. Printed, I do not enjoy reading off the screen and if you want a specific chapter it takes far longer to move to it than flicking thro a book.

bm. Printed books are more pleasurable to use, but ebooks are very convenient for distance learners like myself - the online systems are brilliant. It would be fantastic if there could be both a copy of an ebook online and a normal copy in the library.

bn. Both have their advantages - ebooks are very useful as I rarely have time to visit the library and it means you can work whenever's convenient to you; however I have been in the situation where I have relied on an ebook being accessible and then the Sunday before my essay was due it was inexplicably unavailable to me. You can trust a real book! I would never read an ebook for fun - reading too much of one hurts the eyes after a while.

bo. Both depending on the context. An eReader will never be able to replicate a bookshelf, but hauling a stack of books around will never become an easy task. So, at home, printed books, on holiday, eBooks. For research, both.

bp. Prefer to read hard copy, but am delighted to be able to access books electronically, especially if I can download them for later use.

bq. Printed, find them easier in searching for specific information from specific chapters

br. I prefer to access them as I do not have to track down the physical resource, however my experience of them this year was that they were extremely difficult to access and finding the hard copies in the main library was much easier. I find printed books much easier to read, as my eyes hurt when reading on screen and I seem to miss more when I read on the screen.

bs. Printed, and I have copies of both the ones I've used, but it's also helpful to have the e-books to refer to in a situation when I don't have the hard copy available, and to recommend them to others.

bt. Electronic - I can highlight for different purposes at different times and it is easier to access when I live over 40 miles from the library.

bu. Despite being a fan of all things technological, I still seem to prefer printed books and articles. I like being able to write on them, being able to flick back and forth from page to page, and I find them less of a strain on the eye.

bv. Printed books - they are easier to read (especially when skimming/looking for specific pages) and use - I also prefer their portability when compared to ebooks

bw. Electronic books

bx. Printed as they are easier to flick through and navigate

by. Ebooks because they cost less and you've got it all in your computer

bz. Hard call! I appreciate the accessibility of EBooks, particularly on a tight deadline. However, I find I can assimilate information easier from a hard copy. I realise I could print the book but that seems a waste of effort.

ca. As a distance learner e-books save an hour drive to the library

cb. It's easier to browse and scan read printed books, but ebooks mean more texts are available and more accessible.

cc. Printed books, I find it easier to take notes and interpret the information.

cd. Electronic access is great - however, I do prefer to print them out and read them.

ce. I am more comfortable with printed books. I find it easier to keep notes and bookmark selections. I find it helpful to be able to flip through the pages.

cf. Printed books. I don't like reading on screen and find it easier to find what I need by flicking through the pages of a real book!

cg. I prefer printed books because you can select the pages that you want - and there aren't sections missing like there can be with e-books. However, I like the easy access you have to e-books and the no 'fighting' for the few copies available. Also the fact that you don't have to return them!

ch. Printed, the turning of the E book pages was frustratingly slow. Also not able to 'flick through' to find the relevant part. E books were brilliant when hard copies were not available just more time consuming to use.

ci. Printed books are easier to read and I live near the library so it is no problem to get them, but e-books are easier to access so they're better if you only need to read a small section.

cj. Printed books because I prefer reading on paper to reading on a screen.

ck. Printed because you can take them to bed

cl. I'm trying to adapt to reading on the screen, primarily for environmental reasons --- as well as for keeping articles organised on my computer rather than laying on a desk. Plus, it's more efficient, rather than running around for books. But, I just don't like reading on a screen yet.

cm. Printed - I don't like reading off a screen

cn. I like both, without a preference. Electronic books are great for referencing and study as they can be used on screen directly alongside the writing [typing] you are doing. Printed books can make reading fiction a real pleasure and event: I have early editions of Lord of the Rings which add to the sense of history in reading them and the typeface in the first editions of Mervyn Peake's Gormenghast trilogy is something to behold.

- co.** Ebooks can be easier to search for key words etc. but printed books feel more 'real'. Can't explain it that well, sorry.
- cp.** Printed books are better because you can read them anywhere, they're more beautiful and more comfortable to read. I wouldn't read an ebook that I really like - I'd buy it as a book. Ebooks are convenient for essays because you can search for one word, and they're easy to obtain, but apart from that they're pretty rubbish.
- cq.** Printed - greater sensuous connection with the material and much quicker to use.
- cr.** I prefer printed books as I find them easier to read than reading something on a screen. But as a student who lives outside Cambridge, I have found the ebooks useful when I have needed access to literature away from the library.
- cs.** I prefer printed books because you can carry them around with you. ebook has the advantage that you could read what you want at any time without the burden of carrying around. You have however need internet connection.
- ct.** Electronic - full text searching
- cu.** I greatly prefer printed books when possible however, electronic books can be very useful for research purposes.
- cv.** I do prefer printed books as it is easier to read especially if you want to read long chapter or scan through the book. But the ease of access to ebooks is very useful especially as not based at the university
- cw.** Printed books is easier to go back to the page where you found the information.
- cx.** Electronic books to reduce volume and travelling weight, and printed books are still necessary because not all books come out in ebook form
- cy.** Printed books as I find them easier to manipulate and scan quickly. The printed book is also easier to read.
- Printed books as I can flick through them, and I find them easier to refer to than having to turn computer on and look up section on e-book**
- da.** I really prefer hard copies but the library simply could not support 120 students writing the same assignment in the same 2 weeks, there was not enough hard copies of the recommended books available. Consequently I was very grateful that the ebooks scheme was available, even though on occasions it was problematic.
- db.** Printed books - the time it takes to move from page to page with ebooks is frustrating.
- dc.** electronic, for environmental reasons
- dd.** I prefer printed books, because I like sitting somewhere comfortable, holding the book and reading it. On the other hand, electronic books have their assets. I do not need to carry them from the library and back again and I can have access whenever I need it.
- de.** Electronic books are really convenient to access at home, and I like being able to print sections off and write notes on them which I can't do on printed books. However, I dislike reading on screen, so printing off sections ends up being costly.
- df.** printed, easier to use
- dg.** I prefer printed books as I don't like to read large amounts on screen. I know I can print off and read but then you have hundreds of loose papers!
- dh.** electronic book because they allow you to use the computer to search for specific words and therefore reduces the amount of skim reading necessary
- di.** Printed books are easier to read but not always available when lots of people need the same one for a deadline. Ebooks are great as they avoid this problem
- dj.** I only used electronic books if I couldn't find a printed copy. I prefer printed books as I like to have the text in front of me rather than on the screen and I can also book mark the pages that I want, rather than having to scroll through and find what I need.
- dk.** printed, because i enjoy reading off paper better; i do like ebooks because they are convenient to access at any time
- dl.** Printed books - I do not like reading bulk text from a computer screen
- dm.** Printed books are more easy on the eye. Electronic books save you a trip to the library, and are good for locating information easily. However, printed books are still better.
- dn.** Printed - far easier to make notes from. Often difficult to print out specific chapters from an e-book. Whilst e-books are useful when texts are in great demand, I much prefer to have the printed text in front of me as a collective entity. Do not like reading at the computer screen and to print takes time and money when I could just get the book from the library.
- do.** Both. Easier to read hard copies. Sometimes more convenient to use ebooks, i.e. from home.
- dp.** See previous answer

dq. Printed books

dr. They each have their benefits. Ebooks are easy to access and the search facility is a massive benefit. However, printed books don't hurt my eyes.

ds. Printed books as they are much easier to read. However, the benefit of ebooks is clear when demand for certain books is high during assignment preparation periods.

dt. Electronic good for note taking onto a computer but less flexible in where you can use

du. Electronic books

dv. Printed books - because they are easier to use and use far less printer ink.

dw. I still prefer printed books, partly because I am more used to them, but also because I don't have a laptop and like to move away from my desk to read. Printed books are more portable and I often read in the car etc.

dx. I use all resources as they are available - no real preference.

dy. It depends what the book is going to be used for and how quickly I needed it. If I know what book I want, and it is available as an ebook, then it is quick and easy to download it, but if i don't specifically know what I want it is easier to browse printed books in a library.

dz. It is more convenient as it means that you do not have to take the book out from the library.

ea. If I was confident in using them, then I would prefer electronic books because they are accessible from anywhere.

eb. I wouldn't say I prefer which to which. Both have their own value.

ec. Printed books - it's easier to find what you're looking for and to move between different chapters.

ed. Printed books - I find them much easier to read, but if it's only a matter of scanning through a specific section or chapter then ebooks are very useful. I wouldn't read a whole one on screen though.

ee. For academic use I would be happy to use e-books from my own home rather than to travel to an appropriate library. For pleasure, I would rather read 'real' books as there is still something special about the physical process of reading and finishing a book.

ef. Printed. Because I'm a bookhound. I collect books and love the feel of them.

eg. I would always prefer printed books but during this course the distance from Cambridge made ebooks far more convenient. When I borrowed books and they were recalled it was impossible to return them other than by post, which is nerve-wracking, and I often had to return them half-read and hope I had all that I needed from them.

eh. I Prefer Printed Books b/c I read Faster on paper than on screen Also, I prefer the experience of reading books (traditional) and Going to the Library to view various collections.

ei. Print is still the most flexible medium, as you can read/refer to the text anytime and anywhere; although wi-fi is spreading, it will never feel as natural and hassle-free as opening a simple book.

ej. I prefer printed if I had the option but for out of library hours or if I am unable to access a desired books ebooks are indispensable

ek. printed as you can sit and read them off the screen, which doesn't make your eyes go funny. BUT for the speed needed to get through the essays ebooks are great because you can access them instantly and you don't need to stress about getting them out of the library.

el. pleased to use ebooks but would be delighted if more books in general were available in this format

em. I prefer printed books because I find that I stare at the computer screen too much in a day anyway and I get headaches and end up squinting at the screen.

en. Printed books because they are easier to read and flick through, but e books are great for getting information away from the library

eo. E-books because you don't have to go to the library to get them out or take them back and you don't have a specific loan period.

ep. Neither specifically, it is great to have a range and I am not sure that it matters how you accommodate that. It can be nice to hold a book but obviously at certain points in the year the library stock falls and this gives a useful extension, you are not left without books.

eq. printed books, easier to read

er. I prefer reading printed books, because it is more comfortable to read as my eyes can hurt after reading a book on the computer screen. On the other hand, it is comfortable to read a book on screen because the relevant parts can be searched quicker.

es. Electronic books do not need to be taken out of a library and are easily accessible. I do however like to print as reading from a computer screen is difficult for many hours.

et. Electronic are immensely convenient and they give you the opportunity to highlight and fiddle with data whilst you think about it, and no right thinking human being would ever dream of

making notes on a paper book. The problem that I had was that I would forget which e-books I had available, which was not the case of the hardback volumes that would stare at me from the book case.

eu. I prefer printed books. I find it straining to read from a computer screen.

ev. At the moment they serve different functions. Printed books provide greater variety, access in the same place, a nice tactile experience, easy 'flicking through' and can be photocopied. Electronic texts can be easily searched by keyword but can be a pain to access, are usually in several different locations/access portals, cannot often be accessed away from WIFI and a laptop (reading on a train for example) and depending on the access system attaching sticky notes is often impossible.

ew. Printed books - I spend a lot of my day staring at a screen and worry about my eyesight. It's nice to be able to use a non-electronic resource sometimes. However, I am quite lazy about going to the library and often stay at home and use electronic resources instead.

ex. Electronic books are environmental friendly and convient to access and store. But too long reading on screen is tiresome. in addition i can't mark it to remind me where to look at when referencing.

ey. Paper books because i prefer reading from a book rather than a computer screen.

ez. printed ones, since they are healthier for your eyes, also you can take them with you when travelling, and also if you photocopy it, you can make annotations directly to the text

fa. Once I got used to reading from a computer screen, the e-books seemed to be advantageous insofar as there was no need to go to the library or worry about returning books on time, and it also saves paper.

fb. they both have their uses- no particular preference

fc. Printed books. It's more satisfying.

fd. Printed books, because for some reason I don't take in the information properly when reading on screen. I also usually type notes from a book while I'm reading, and this is more difficult if both things are on the same screen.

fe. electronic books are very useful when searching for specific phrases or theories. But generally I prefer to use printed books as they are much more transportable and can be easily picked up and put down again.

ff. Printed books because they are easier to read

fg. I see a value in both but tend to prefer printed books for a couple of reasons. I like reading for pleasure as well as work and associate books with physical things such as holding them and flicking back and forth between pages

fh. Printed. Find it difficult to read on screen and I need to print off anyway to highlight relevant texts

fi. Both. I like to read from both, but for research, I prefer to read electronically, as I can type into my notes at the same time. I tend to read research at the computer, rather than read on the sofa etc and make notes there; it's more practical to write and read research at the same time and secondly, I like the different zones for escapist reading and factual/ theory analysis.

fj. My mind has not yet been made up on this issue. E-books are great especially for books in high demand or if you live far away from the library. However, I really do prefer reading old-fashioned books, simply because that is what I am used to and I know how to efficiently gather information from them. The trouble is that the technology is so new that only a small fraction of the books I need to consult are available so I have to go to the library anyway and given the choice, I usually prefer normal books.

fk. Printed books, as easier to refer to and mark pages on and I prefer reading off screen

fl. I prefer to use printed books, because ebooks make me feel as if I am not reading a published, legitimate book because I tend to read it on the computer screen rather than printing it out.

fm. printed books but can understand if they are popular that sometimes there is a need to use an e book if all copies are taken out

fn. no preference - both have advantages. ebooks for use and availability and paper copies for portability

fo. Electronic books are easy to access, you need not carry them around.

fp. Prefer E books for research. Reason is accessibility as I live away from the faculty library. Also I can search for individual phrases of relevance.

fq. Printed books because of portability and ease in finding and digesting information.

fr. Both are good for different reasons - I prefer the accessibility of ebooks as I can use them at any time day or night without having to travel to a library or worry if someone else has borrowed

a printed copy. But I prefer to read printed books than from the screen and printing ebooks is expensive.

fs. Depends if it is a large chunk of text then usually printed book but ebooks are useful for chapters.

ft. No, they are useful to have but I much prefer reading from a book than on screen.

fu. electronic: less heavy

fv. I prefer printed books because I find them easier to read. I only use ebooks when I cannot access a printed book

fw. I prefer a selection; nothing can replace having all the information you need on a shelf in front of you. Ebooks are valuable tools when you know which book you want but are out of town or any copies of the text have already been checked out.

fx. Printed books are easier to read, but it is far easier to access an ebook when it is online.

fy. Printed books - it is much easier to flick through the pages and find what you need. It's also easier to skim read a printed copy.

fz. I think that the main benefit for e-books and e-journals is their ease of accessibility, especially when away from the faculty on placement or on holiday.

ga. Ebooks-don't have to go to the library

gb. I prefer printed books but the fact you can access ebooks without having to go to a library means that they are quick and easy to use

gc. It is a lot easier to find the correct section and compare different pages of a real book. However it is easier to search an ebook.

gd. Printed - they're complete, and you can bookmark them easily. They don't take time to load. You can easily cross-reference pages.

ge. Printed Books because then you might stumble across a good chapter that you hadn't planned on reading.

gf. printed books. They are easier to flick through, and I don't particularly like reading on screens.

gg. printed books allow you to keep going back to parts you need - I guess you could do this with on-line books but it is much easier to just pull them off the shelf!

gh. printed. I find it difficult to read and process information on a screen and like to be able to annotate texts.

gi. I prefer printed books as staring at a screen for hours can be a strain on your eyes. Having said this, e-books are very useful if the printed book you are after in the library has already been issued to someone else. I have discovered that many e-books on the internet do not show you the whole book which is sometimes frustrating.

gj. I prefer reading printed books as I find it hard to stare at a screen for the time required to read electronic books, but I like the convenience of having the most popular textbooks online.

gk. Printed - see comments above.

gl. As a rule I prefer printed books as i find them easier to read -for me, reading from a screen brings on headaches and I think it's wasteful to print too many pages. Printed books are also more portable - you can read them where ever you happen to be. Having said that, ebooks reduce the pressure on library stocks when lots of students are wanting the same title for an assignment - you can access the book without having to recall it. They are also useful if you know you only want to look at a small section of a book, you don't have to take up a space on your library card for the sake of a few pages. So, both useful in their own ways.

gm. Printed books - easy to flick between pages and scan for relevant sections, mark margins if I own the books, carry them about to read in cafes etc, easier on the eye.

gn. printed books are best because they don't hurt your eyes to read them and electronic books are better because you can copy and paste them into your notes so probably electronic books.

go. Printed books I enjoy reading a hard copy, it is easy to go back to a certain page. I concentrate better and can follow what I have been reading. Beside, you can take a book with you to bed.

gp. As above

gq. I prefer the e-book option as I often do not have time to read the whole text and by using an e-book I can search for specific information and read around that area of the text.

gr. Electronic books as the library times and lending options did not suit me.

gs. Both have equal value, although I would almost always purchase a printed book for recreational reading over an ebook. They are more transportable, durable and simply easier to read.

gt. Electronic books are good to highlight sentences or paragraphs, also a little more manageable. Printed books are more reliable however.

gu. More often I prefer printed books if I am going to read a full text because I can read a printed book at any location. I am not limited by a computer or internet access. A printed book I can take and read outdoors, in a cafe, before a film, etc.

gv. Printed - I find printed books easier to navigate and easier on my eyes - I can read printed books wherever I want, too!

gw. If possible, I would use both. Why? Because ebooks allow for quick and easy searching, whereas printed books are easier to read and make notes.

gx. printed, because it's easier for me to highlight, take notes, and read.

gy. Electronic - easily accessible and print off important pages and annotate

gz. printed preferred 1. don't like spend too long time reading from computer screen, already spend huge time for work / leisure. 2. you can bring the hard copy book anywhere

ha. I want to have access to both. Sometimes we work at home sometimes we go to libraries. And e-books are good for looking up something quickly mainly whereas I can do photocopying with real books.

hb. Printed books- they are much easier to access, to skim read through and to skip back and forward through the book. I also personally love books as an object and would always prefer to have a book in my hands to reading one via a screen.

hc. I would say electronic, for assignments etc, research is much quicker, it can be done from home, I don't live near any library and I would have to travel an hour to get to the uni library, searching for specific titles or chapters and getting relevant info simple, and relatively quick, but i prefer printed books in general for my own pleasure or for subject specific info or for books to inspire lessons, to own and keep

hd. Printed books because there isn't the possibility of the screen freezing or any other such technical issues. I prefer reading off a page rather than off a screen.

he. Printed books: they are easy to read in different locations and don't involved screen glare or dead battery on laptop!

hf. I prefer printed books as it is sometimes quite a struggle to read large chunks of text on screen, however i do like the ease of accessibility you get with ebooks.

hg. Would prefer to use ebooks if they were easier to access/navigate.

hh. Printed books as, naturally, it causes less strain on the eyes. However, for ease of access this year, e-books/e-journals have been far more useful as I am not in close proximity to the faculty library

hi. I prefer hard copies but perhaps I am just old school. I find it difficult to annotate and read at bed-time!

hj. I don't think I could pick between the two. Having ebooks available is very handy when you're not at a library, but I also like being able to handle the book with my own hands too and it can often be easier when searching for something and you need to flick through an entire book.

hk. Electronic books for general ease and not having to worry about due dates.

13. How did you find out about the ebooks? 230 responses

Please mark all that apply

<i>Faculty Library Staff</i>	126 (55%)
<i>Faculty Library Website</i>	107 (47%)
<i>Faculty Library Newsletter</i>	2 (1%)
<i>Signs on Library shelves</i>	30 (13%)
<i>Labels on front of print copies</i>	21 (9%)
<i>Newton catalogue</i>	91 (40%)
<i>Friend</i>	23 (10%)
<i>Tutor/Lecturer</i>	56 (24%)
<i>Other (please specify in the comment box below)</i>	21 (9%)

Comments:

a. googlescholar

b. I tend to google search the book and then access it via the link provided.

c. Family, on my own, friends- but I may not be thinking of the same ebooks...

d. At a previous university

- e. I believe an email was sent around notifying students of this resource - that is how I first became aware of e-books
- f. But these aren't the eBooks I've used.
- g. Google scholar
- h. I have no idea. I've always known about ebooks.
- i. google
- j. I have used ebooks almost since they started being used about 12 years ago. So I have always known of their existence. I do not use educational ebooks because what i need is very specific. It the best of cases, I download pdf articles from journals which I use in my research.
- k. Google Scholar
- l. For other libraries is has been through internet based search engines.
- m. found them randomly on the net, often from google scholar searches
- n. College
- o. General search on the internet
- p. I used E-books when I studied at other universities. Never realise Cambridge also carry them, perhaps not in my field, i.e. second language education.

14. Do you have any further comments to make in relation to ebooks? 64 responses

- a. I just assumed that they would be there and they were. I am also part time staff and the university and so know the systems well.
- b. They are a good idea if you just need a bit of the book, but not great if you want to read the whole thing.
- c. The biggest problem with the e-books I found was the user-interface. The design of the ones I managed to gain access to was such that only 1 page was downloaded/visible at any one time. Whilst this is perfect for limiting the availability of the text in order to stop a reprobate from downloading the whole document and redistributing it, it also means the e-book is a massive pain to read and use. For my personal experience, a 1-off large pdf download, giving me a usable document at the end of the process, would be orders of magnitude more practical!
- d. Wish more were available!
- e. Looking for books on Amazon
- f. I do wonder why certain books are chosen to be ebooks and others aren't. For example, the Judith Bell book has multiple holdings and is also an ebook (obviously because a lot of people need it for research projects) but when there is just one copy of a book which is on a reading list, it would be good to have extra copies/ebooks because students do tend to get out books at the same times in the term.
- g. There is great potential in their use.
- h. A good resource if the book you are after is unavailable and easy to search through them for the section you actually want.
- i. Good luck with your research- this is an interesting area where I am sure there is a lot of room for development.
- j. You might have made a mistake in asking me because i am not a student any more.
- k. I know computer ebooks can do a lot, for example, it can drastically reduce the weight of lifting the books; it makes my life easier by getting access to the site from anywhere in the world; it is environmentally friendly, we are saving our trees by using electronic books. I know that at some point ebooks will be the way of the future...but I am the older generation that still likes to get physically hold the book. It gives the sense of realism. I like to physically walk through the library's aisle looking at the various titles on the shelf. Even though a number of books can be too heavy to take home or be a pain in the neck to renew it, but it gives me a PURPOSE to get out to the library and look for the articles and/or books that I need for my assignments. I also believe that it is very important to interact with the librarians as computers don't give or offer the same care or human touch of friendliness and the community life of the library has offer to students and the faculty at the University of Cambridge.
- l. eBooks are not currently centralised at my university. I would like to see a separate eLibrary catalogue, in order to make eBooks universally accessible. Even to develop this into and electronic copyright library in order to make a wider range of eTexts available to the student body.
- m. I think for very popular and large texts, especially like methodology texts, ebooks are useful.

- n.** They are a good complement to books. I usually use them as a last resort, preferring to seek out actual copies of hard-bound or soft-bound books first.
- o.** I think ebooks are a great way to widen access to course material.
- p.** All books should be available in this format and more than 10 pages should be printable.
- q.** I wish there were more of them available!
- r.** I can see their usefulness but will only ever use them out of convenience when all other methods of reading the text are impracticable. I realise this convenience is a major 'selling point' of e books but it is a quality I resent conceding. I suppose I see ebooks as typical and symptomatic of our lazy society which always foregrounds convenience over more lasting values.
- s.** We need more support in using e-books from the university.
- t.** I do use a fair amount of electronic material during my research, but this is almost all stumbled across through Google, rather than Newton. The overwhelming majority of resources within Newton are printed, and though I am vaguely aware of the existence of catalogues dedicated to e-books, I see no reason to consult them.
- u.** Despite above comments, they do have a place - for reference books and frequently used books it's handy to be able to look at them from home etc. Having said that, though, I very rarely do. This is partly because of the palaver of logging on to the university system. If I did this more often I'd probably get used to it and find it more convenient - part of it is habit, and I'm not in the habit of using ebooks yet.
- v.** I think that ebooks are a good idea in principle, as they make the material widely and easily available to readers. However, I would prefer to see more copies in more libraries of printed books, as I find these easier and more satisfying to use.
- w.** Useful when printed is not available, particularly for books that can only be accessed in UL. Would be better if there was a wider selection available.
- x.** Make it easier to access the whole book. It was very frustrating to only be able to access one page and then have to search further to find the rest of the book.
- y.** Extremely helpful. The Sage Handbook of Qualitative research would be another useful addition.
- z.** I started this survey thinking about all ebooks (I have around 100 ebooks - mainly novels) I have read, but after working through the survey I think you wanted responses to the ebooks available via the university, so changed some of my answers to reflect this.
- aa.** I personally feel e-books should be more accessible. I still find most of the e-books available only as preview. It is useful, avoids the hassle of going to a library . Leaves the individual with the option of lending/purchasing a hard copy if required in future.
- ab.** As above really
- ac.** How do I find out about them? Is there an Index of Titles somewhere? I wasn't in Cambridge during the 2008 Michaelmas term so I may have missed an orientation session.
- ad.** They are useful as it means you have access to a text that may not otherwise be available from the library (particularly those very popular ones) but I would prefer to read the printed version if there was a choice.
- ae.** A worthwhile initiative.
- af.** Many of the issues I refer to are, I know, due to copyright restrictions, but with a raven/atlas login, the security of restricting texts to academics is not in question. I'm not sure why these issues can't be worked out where a faculty (Or university) library can't have access where they possess the physical text.
- ag.** Super idea! Why don't the various Universities get together for students access, to all the ebooks on offer? I was lucky, though foul means, was able to access Warwick's resources and it was great too!
- ah.** I did find them useful when all the library copies of a book were out on loan.
- ai.** In the Education Faculty library, there was a huge section of Routledge Falmer books which had not come online at the time when they would have been most useful.
- aj.** I only discovered the ebooks by chance and I think their existence should be more widely publicised on courses and around the library service to make loaning easier.
- ak.** A useful resource
- al.** A very useful and valuable service. Bacon saving on more than one occasion. However, a more easy to negotiate database would be a Godsend. Right now you have to know exactly what you're looking for. Where a 'pop in a subject and see what comes up' database would be really useful.

am. Owing to libraries only holding a certain number of copies of a particular book, it would be useful if more were available as e-books: the number of times I've wanted a book, only for it to be already on loan!

an. They are good but only if they meet the demand for books which are not common in the library - otherwise there doesn't really seem to be any point.

ao. The format in which you read them is not very user friendly - instead of a pdf or so forth, which you can scroll down through the pages, you have to press 'next page' every time. There are also then problems with the pages loading.

ap. more e-books in various research field

aq. I think all book should be available as ebooks as we have limited number of copies in libraries and also many times we do not have access to good libraries. Ebooks are available 24/7

ar. Google scholar has a surprising amount of ebooks that have been peer-reviewed and scholarly. I didn't think it would be as useful as it has, but only when I know exactly which book I need. (not doing a random search)

as. I would encourage the faculty library to keep introducing new e-books as they are a very useful aid to research.

at. Please continue to add to them!

au. I was never able to find books I needed from the Newton catalogue and I do think it would be beneficial if all books were e books, as although I prefer paper books I would prefer that I had access to books when needed. (Good luck with your research)

av. Problems - some ebooks on the internet (purposely) have sections missing to encourage purchase. Although it is useful to see the format of the book I am a strong advocate of open book publishing. Other problem of ebook is the fact that books are generally portrait and screens are landscape. I have a 17 high resolution inch monitor but they are difficult to read and it is not practical to display 2 portrait pages side by side.

aw. Great in theory - not so great in practice!

ax. I will always want books that I need to refer to often on my shelf - a virtual bookshelf just isn't the same. When I do use e-books I print off the bits I want. This is pretty wasteful of resources and not as aesthetically pleasing as a printed book.

ay. ebooks are handy especially when you are stuck and can't find a book in your library. it is easy to access.

az. Google Scholar

ba. the library collection of Cambridge is disappointing, so is E-book. Thank you.

bb. There have been instances where certain ebooks have not been accessible for a long amount of time. I've ended up buying a lot of the books for my course because it's just easier that way. I guess that shows how I don't feel confident using ebooks.

bc. It is very frustrating that a large number of the ebooks can only be accessed from the faculty premises. Considering how much time we spend on placement away from the faculty it would be beneficial to be able to access all ebooks from our placement schools.

Appendix C – Interview Schedule

General

1. What was it that motivated the implementation of the Cambridge ebook project?
2. What were the initial goals of the project?
3. What did you expect to achieve? And how did you expect ebooks to be used in the 1st/2nd/3rd year of the project?
4. What problems did you think having an ebook collection would solve for both the Librarian and the student?
5. How successful would you say the project has been so far?
6. Have you obtained positive feedback from librarians and students?

Selection & Acquisition

1. Do you know how participating Libraries have decided which ebooks to request from you? Is it based on usage of existing print copies or are some ebooks bought without a print copy already being available?
2. Do you think we will ever reach a point where ebooks are bought instead of print rather than to accompany it?
3. Are the ebooks purchased so far generally more expensive than their print counterparts?
4. How do you decide whether to buy books in perpetuity or to buy them on subscription?
5. Do you get asked to buy more ebooks than your budget allows and how do you determine which titles get bought and which have to wait?
6. There are currently over 1000 titles in the ebook collection, how many more do you think the University wants/needs to acquire access to?
7. What about those books that aren't available electronically? Do you think publishers will ever produce all of their material in an electronic format?
8. How much have you spent on the ebook collection in year 1, year 2 etc?

Usage

1. Did you have any preconceived predictions of ebook usage and if so how did you expect them to be used?
2. Has the usage so far matched your predictions?
3. Are there some ebooks which haven't been used at all? If so, why do you think this is?
4. What do you think puts students off using them?

Promotion

1. What promotional techniques have you and other participating Libraries employed to promote the ebook collection to staff and students?

2. How successful and effective do you think these have been in encouraging ebook usage?
3. How keen do you think academic staff are in using ebooks and promoting them to their students?
4. Is there anything that is not being done in terms of promoting the collection that you think could be?
5. Are the user education sessions at the UL popular? How many have you run and on average how many people attended?
6. Do you know how many individual libraries run their own user education sessions?
7. What kinds of students attend these sessions? (Masters, UGs?)

Problems

1. What effect do you think the problems with e-books (lockouts, download & print issues for e.g.) have had on reader's use of e-books? Do you think that it has put them off?
 2. How responsive are publishers to the University's needs? Are they willing to adapt and offer a flexible service?
 3. The NetLibrary model offers access to 2 simultaneous users. Are the number of turnaways for titles supplied by this vendor high when compared with MyiLibrary?
- Is there anything else you would like to comment upon/add?